



UNIVERSITY OF  
WINCHESTER

# ARE YOU READY TO RENT?

YOUR ESSENTIAL GUIDE TO  
HOUSING AFTER YOUR 1ST YEAR



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# 1 HERE TO HELP

**Student Housing Services are based in room 1 of St Swithuns Lodge on the King Alfred Campus and are open 9am-5pm Monday to Thursday and 9am-4.30pm Friday. Although the whole team are able to help, there is a dedicated Off-Campus Housing Team who can offer help and advice on all aspects of off-campus accommodation.**

If you have any questions or concerns about finding a property, signing a tenancy or a problem once you're in a property, you can contact the office:

**In person:** St Swithuns Lodge Room 1

**By email:** [housing@winchester.ac.uk](mailto:housing@winchester.ac.uk)

**By phone:** 01962 827533



St Swithuns Lodge

## 2 WHAT ARE YOUR OPTIONS?

### APPLY FOR ON-CAMPUS ACCOMMODATION AS A RETURNING STUDENT

If you are a full time student from a non-EU country, the Channel Islands, are a care-leaver or a student with a disability or medical needs (with supporting documents), then you may apply to live on campus again. You will need to re-apply for housing each year.

Students can re-apply for on campus accommodation if they are eligible to do so. The application opens in December and is available here: [www.winchester.ac.uk](http://www.winchester.ac.uk). Keep an eye on the website for updates on the exact date you will be able to apply from. The application release date is reviewed annually and is subject to change.

For international and Channel Island students, accommodation offers are subject to availability. We may not be able to guarantee you a room.

### SEARCH FOR OFF-CAMPUS ACCOMMODATION

The majority of returning students will look to move off campus for the remainder of their degree. This guide should help point you in the right direction.

## 3 GETTING STARTED

Finding accommodation away from campus can seem a very daunting prospect to some students. There are many decisions to be made about location, who you want to live with and how much rent you're willing to pay.

The main point to remember is not to be pressured into making any decisions before you're totally ready. Often students feel pressured into making quick decisions without good enough information to base those decisions on. In Winchester there is plenty of good quality student accommodation so there is no need to sign a contract without giving it some thought.

Student Housing Services have put this booklet together to help guide you through this process and to try to answer most of the common concerns that you may have. You should then be equipped to make an informed decision and to avoid the most common problems.

## TIMELINE

<b>December</b>	Attend our Housing Advice sessions. Meet staff from various advice centres and hear from fellow students about their experiences. Dates to be advertised in Semester 1. Applications for on-campus accommodation will open at <a href="http://www.winchester.ac.uk">www.winchester.ac.uk</a> for those eligible to re-apply.
<b>Christmas</b>	Read through this guide and start thinking about who you want to live with and in what sort of accommodation. See page 8.
<b>January</b>	House adverts will start to go live this month via our advertising website 'Studentpad', <a href="http://www.winchesterstudentpad.co.uk">www.winchesterstudentpad.co.uk</a>
<b>January/ February</b>	Spend time viewing properties and getting to know the area (we recommend you view at least three or four before making a decision).
<b>March</b>	If you decide on a property, the landlord will give you a contract – get it checked out <b>BEFORE</b> you sign it or part with any money.
<b>April/May/ June</b>	Don't panic if you haven't yet found anything you really like. Some of the best properties are not available until this time anyway.
<b>Vacation Time</b>	We are still here all summer, Christmas and Easter if you have any questions you need answering.

## 4 TYPES OF ACCOMMODATION

### WINCHESTER STUDENT LANDLORD FORUM

There are currently nearly 200 properties in Winchester which are registered on our Winchester Student Landlord Forum. These properties are owned by private landlords who agree to certain stipulations before we advertise their properties for them:

- Their accommodation will have reached [Winchester City Council Shared Housing Accreditation standards](#) or [HMO licence standards](#) (for properties with 5 or more residents)
- They will use fair and legal contracts
- They will allow Student Housing Services to act as an 'honest broker' in any landlord/tenant disputes

### UNIVERSITY MANAGED HOUSING

The University of Winchester rents a number of off-campus properties from owners and sub-lets them to students. These properties range from 3-6 bedrooms in size. All properties have reached Winchester City Council Accreditation standards and/or HMO Licencing legal standards.

Renting one of these houses is a good way to secure housing of a suitable standard; with the peace of mind that the university are there to sort out any problems you may have with the accommodation.

The properties are rented to groups of full time University of Winchester students and are let on either a 48 or 52 week contract (dependant on property). Rent is payable in 3 instalments directly to the University and there is no deposit payable, just a £100 Holding Fee.

## LETTING AGENTS

There are several letting agencies in Winchester that deal with student rentals. A good agent will ensure they listen to your requirements and can save you time in looking for the right property. The disadvantage of using an agency is that because they work on commission they have a motivation to make sure the landlord receives the highest rent possible. They may also charge fees to potential tenants (admin charges, reference checks etc) which may no longer be legal. From 1st June 2019, landlords and agents are prohibited from charging any fees that are not 'permitted', see 'Tenant Fees Act' below.

It is also important that you check a letting agent is signed up to an approved regulatory body. Letting agents joined up to such bodies, like [www.arla.co.uk](http://www.arla.co.uk) agree to comply with certain professional standards. Those regulatory bodies usually also have someone to contact if you have a complaint against a letting agent.

We do not recommend any individual letting agencies and you will need to check whether the property you are looking at has met Winchester City Council Accreditation Standards.

## WINCHESTER CITY COUNCIL SHARED HOUSING ACCREDITATION SCHEME

Winchester City Council, in consultation with The University of Winchester, has set up a Housing Accreditation scheme specifically for shared accommodation in the Winchester area. This is a voluntary scheme for local landlords aimed at raising the standards of shared housing.

### THE SCHEME TAKES INTO CONSIDERATION:

- Gas safety
- Electrical safety
- Fire safety
- Security
- Furniture and furnishings
- Amenities: kitchen, bathrooms and WC's
- Energy efficiency
- Property condition and decoration
- Management

All properties advertised directly on the University of Winchester website are accredited or will have reached accreditation standards by the start of the tenancy.

## HMO LICENSING

Shared houses, with 3 or more unrelated tenants are called HMOs (House in Multiple Occupation), which means that you are likely to be moving into an HMO next year.

From October 2018, all HMO properties with 5 or more bedrooms are legally required to have an HMO License. This means that the property meets legal standards for shared accommodation, which include bedroom size, provision of fire detection equipment and general health and safety features.

Landlords can face a hefty fine if they do not have a licence, so make sure you ask to see it!

For further information about both the HMO Licence and the Accreditation scheme, please visit:

[www.winchester.gov.uk/housing/private-housing-and-empty-properties](http://www.winchester.gov.uk/housing/private-housing-and-empty-properties)

## TENANT FEES ACT

A new law came in to force on 1st June 2019, banning landlords and letting agents from charging certain fees in relation to a tenancy. The only payments you should be asked to make include rent, refundable deposit, payments to change the tenancy, early termination charges, utilities, late payment fees. For further information visit <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/tenant-fees-act-2019-guidance>

## 5 WHEN AND WHERE TO LOOK

You may find that you receive information from external accommodation providers (landlords, letting agents etc) in the first term, however, we believe that a good time to start house hunting is from January onwards. Student Housing Services start to advertise Landlord Forum properties and UMH properties (see page 2) from mid-January onwards and find that new properties are registered onto [www.winchesterstudentpad.co.uk](http://www.winchesterstudentpad.co.uk) throughout the academic year.

Not all landlords or agents choose to advertise through Studentpad so keep an eye on some of the other avenues we've described below which is by no means a definitive list.

If you are looking for or viewing properties before January, please make sure you have taken some time to read about private renting and consider your choice of housemates.

### UOW PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSING SEARCH

The Private Sector Housing Search goes live in mid-January. The link to this will be advertised beforehand via the Intranet and Social Media. This is where Student Housing Services advertises off-campus properties including University Managed Houses, private landlord properties and local lodgings.

We use Studentpad to advertise all our properties, visit the site at [www.winchester.studentpad.co.uk](http://www.winchester.studentpad.co.uk). Here you will be able to view property descriptions, advertise a room or need of a room and read through helpful Housing advice.



### FACEBOOK

We have a Facebook page available for students who need to advertise a room in their house, just search 'Winchester student2student noticeboard'.

### INTRANET

There is a specific forum on the intranet called 'Housemates'; this is used by students both advertising a room and looking for a room.

### WORD OF MOUTH

The next best place to find decent housing is from other students who are moving out of houses in their final year. You can often get a good idea about the property's suitability from the current tenants – and they have nothing to gain from recommending a property if it is not up to scratch!

You should remember to check whether the landlord is registered with the Winchester Student/Landlord forum and if the property has been accredited by Winchester City Council – if not – ask yourself why not?

### LOCAL NEWSPAPERS/PROPERTY SEARCH WEBSITES

Private landlords, agencies and tenants looking for housemates will often advertise in local newspapers. The Hampshire Chronicle often carries accommodation adverts. There are also several student property search websites that advertise houses for individual landlords and Letting Agencies.

Once again – Remember some landlords do not reach the standards expected by the forum and the accreditation scheme – so their only option is to try and reach students through newspaper adverts or websites. Why not try our housemate quiz on page 7.

### LETTING AGENCIES

Make sure you check whether a letting agent lets their properties to students as some do not. Make sure you register with a few and they should then contact you when something becomes available. Make sure you ask for a list of their charges and for all relevant safety certificates before signing anything. See page 4 for more information.

## 6 WHERE TO LIVE

Winchester is a relatively small city, and all areas are within walking distance of the King Alfred campus.

### THE POPULAR AREAS FOR STUDENT HOUSING ARE:

#### **Lower Stanmore**

This area consists of the roads south of Wavell Way. This is a very popular area of Winchester with a large number of students living there. It is between a 10-20 minute walk to the University (30 minutes to West Downs) and it is on a major bus route into the City Centre (every 15 minutes). You can find shops on Cromwell Rd and Wavell Way and it is only a 15 minute walk from the Badger Farm Sainsbury's. Main Roads are Cromwell Rd, Stuart Crescent, Stanmore Lane, Kings Avenue, Wavell Way, The Valley and Battery Hill.

#### **Upper Stanmore**

Another popular area of Winchester, this is the part of Stanmore North of Wavell Way up to Romsey Road. It is between a 20-30 minute walk to University (both campuses) and is also on the major bus route into the City Centre. The nearest shops are on Wavell Way and Battery Hill, with a short cut through to Badger Farm through Wavell Way and Walpole Road. Main roads are Stanmore Lane, Walpole Road, Minden Way, Fox Lane, Thurmond Rd and Battery Hill.

#### **Highcliffe & Bar End**

This area is on the other side of Winchester and stretches from Chesil Street upwards. Roads like Highcliffe Road and St Catherines Road are only a 5 minute walk from the City Centre and a 20 minute walk to the University. There are 2 Park & Ride stops here and it is right by the University sports fields. Main roads are Highcliffe Rd, St Catherine's Rd, Fivefields Rd, Gordon Avenue, Nelson Rd, Portal Rd, Milland Rd and Bar End Road.

#### **Badger Farm**

This area is approximately 20-30 minutes away from the University and is also on the number 5 bus route which stops at West Downs Student Village. It is very near to the large Sainsbury's (perfect if you need a job!). Main roads are May Tree Close, Ashbarn Crescent, Honeysuckle Close and Rooks Down Rd.

#### **Fulford**

This is the area behind West Downs which spreads right down towards the train station. It is between a 2-15 minute walk from University and the same for the City Centre. Main roads are Greenhill Rd, Browning Drive, West Hill Park, Cranworth Rd and Brassey Rd.

#### **Winnall**

If you've ventured to the large Tesco in Winchester then you'll have been to Winnall. There is a large housing estate behind the trading estate which is home to quite a few University of Winchester and Winchester School of Art students. It's approximately a 5-10 minute walk into the City Centre and 30-40 minutes to University. The number 5 bus also goes from Winnall to West Downs. Main roads are Imber Rd, Winnall Manor Rd, Ebden Rd and Firmstone Rd.

#### **Weeke and Harestock**

This area is up passed Peter Symonds College. It is approximately a 20-45 minute walk away from the University (it spreads over quite an area). There's a good row of shops along Stoney Lane, including cash points, a Co-op, Waitrose and Aldi. There's also a Tesco Express in Harestock. You can get the No. 1 bus to the town centre and it also stops at the end of Cromwell Road (a couple of minutes from King Alfred Campus).

### TRAVEL AND TRANSPORT

For information about travelling across the city and any discounts available to students, visit the Travel and Transport pages of the Intranet: [www.winchester.ac.uk/travelandtransport](http://www.winchester.ac.uk/travelandtransport)



## 7 CHOOSING HOUSEMATES

You will be spending a lot of time with the people you decide to share a house with. So it is best to make sure you can stand their company for longer than just a night out in the SU!

Successfully sharing a house with someone requires a completely different set of skills from enjoying a night out with them, having lectures with them or sharing the same corridor in halls of residence.

### TRY THE FOLLOWING QUICK QUIZ:

#### What is your attitude to housework?

- A. Everyone should do their share and a rota should be set up.
- B. As long as the washing up gets done I can live with some mess.
- C. What's housework?

#### How do you feel about noise?

- A. I'm here to study and need peace and quiet to do this.
- B. As long as you turn the music down when I need to sleep, I'm easy going.
- C. I'm a sociable person and like having parties, I can put up with your noise, if you can put up with mine.

#### What time do you go to usually go to sleep?

- A. I have a lot of early starts so like to be asleep by 11pm.
- B. If I've got a deadline to meet I can sometimes stay up all night. Otherwise I'm asleep anytime between 12pm and 2am.
- C. I like to sleep all day and party all night.

#### In the kitchen I like to:

- A. Keep my food and equipment clearly marked – for my use only.
- B. If people ask, I'm happy to share food and equipment.
- C. What's yours is mine and what's mine is yours – no big deal.

#### When sorting out bills:

- A. I like to do everything by direct debit and know when bills are due.
- B. I will find the money to pay once the bill arrives.
- C. I usually ignore bills and only pay when there is a red reminder.

If you answered mainly A's you should not consider living with C's. You will almost certainly begin to fight at some stage. This is not to say that A's are more reasonable than C's, it just means that you have different perspectives and lifestyles. People who answer mostly B's will find it fairly easy to adapt to either lifestyles!

### OTHER FACTORS THAT YOU NEED TO CONSIDER ARE:

- Friends staying overnight, and for longer periods – the house is for four, how will you feel when you are made to share with six or seven?
- Do you all have a comparable income? Tension can occur when some of the group can go pubbing and clubbing a lot and others can barely afford the rent.
- Are you all in agreement on the length of the lease, even if it is for 12 months?
- What happens if one of the group leaves the contract early – who pays the rent for the rest of the tenancy – and who is responsible for finding a replacement tenant? (see contracts).

Before you decide to form a group and go house hunting you should also have a frank discussion about your expectations of house sharing – rules about guests, cleaning, washing-up, sharing food, bill payment, when to use heating.

Spending time discussing these matters now will avoid problems occurring later – and will mean that your friendship stays intact to the end of the tenancy and beyond!

## 8 VIEWING A PROPERTY

It is best to try and rent a property which has an HMO licence (see page 4) and/or has been accredited by the Winchester City Council Shared Housing Landlord Accreditation Scheme. These properties will have a certificate displayed in them. By renting one of those properties you should feel confident it is of good quality and safe and secure. The scheme also covers the management of the property so landlords who are part of the scheme act in a responsible manner towards the tenants.

Always go in a group to view a property – this is important for your safety – but also a great help when trying to recollect particular features of each house. Talk to the current tenants if you can – they will give you the fairest opinion of the house and the landlord. They might even let you take photos!

Use our handy Checklist at the end of this booklet when you visit properties.

### BUDGETING

Which? University estimates that, on average, students can spend £200 per week over a year with the largest proportion of this being spent on rent. Unfortunately, costs in Winchester are likely to be slightly higher than the national average as the cost of living is higher. Many students rely on financial support from student loans, family or part time jobs in order to fund their living costs.

The good news is there are plenty of opportunities for part-time work in Winchester. JobShop based in Student Services advertises part-time work. Look out for sessions run by the Careers department.

You could apply to become one of Student Housing Services 'Residential Assistants'. RA's provide vital support to new students living in halls. Applications usually open early in the new year. We also have vacancies for Housing Helpers over our busy moving in weekend in September but keep an eye on the Intranet for updates on both roles.

Nevertheless you will still need to learn to budget if you don't want to graduate with huge debts. This isn't as easy as it sounds and, although it may seem like a boring and tedious task, it is better to keep a record of what you spend each week so that you know when you are going too far into the red.

The budget sheet sampled here gives you an idea of the sort of things you need to budget for. If you are renting a shared house and are responsible for the household bills (gas, electricity, water rates, telephone/internet connection) it is advisable to set up a separate bank account and to each pay money into it to cover the bills (there may be limitations to this with certain Banks).

To understand how much you may be spending try the Online Student Budget Calculator:

[universitywhich.co.uk/student-budget-calculator](http://universitywhich.co.uk/student-budget-calculator)

**Make sure you have an honest chat with each other about how much you can afford. Lots of students want to live close to the university, which is more expensive. Ask yourselves if reducing your walk by ten minutes is worth £20-£40 extra per week.**

START UP COSTS	PER PERSON
Deposit (up to 1 ½ months rent)	£350+
One months rent in advance	£350+
Deposit for TV rental, telephone line etc	£140
Equipment (cutlery, crockery, linen etc)	£40+
Broadband set up costs ( between 4)	£10
<b>TOTAL START UP COST</b>	<b>£890</b>

APPROXIMATE HOUSEHOLD EXPENDITURE	PER PERSON PER MONTH
Rent	£350+
Water rates	£15
Electricity	£15
Gas	£15
Contents insurance	£15-20
TV licence (between 4)	£3
Broadband (between 4)	£5+
Mobile phone	£15+

ADDITIONAL EXPENSES	
Travelling (bus/train/taxi)	£10
Housekeeping (food etc)	£50
Books and equipment	£8
Entertainment	£100
Subscriptions	£5+
Clothing/footwear	£6
Make-up/tolieteries	£5
Other	£20
<b>INDIVIDUAL MONTHLY EXPENDITURE TOTAL</b>	<b>£630 – £800</b>

## 9 SIGNING UP

**Before you sign up to a property, there are a number of things to check first of all.**

### NEGOTIATING

The future for student landlords is very uncertain at the moment as they may find that in a few years, most students will choose to study in a University close to home in order to save money and there are now more rooms for students than ever before. As a result, landlords may be more willing to negotiate with you about the rents and other matters.

If the property doesn't have everything you are looking for (for example – you may think that the kitchen needs more fridge/freezer space, or that you need a washing machine) why not ask?

When you are negotiating with the landlord ALWAYS make sure you get everything in writing. This includes any promised repairs or improvements to the property.

### CONTRACTS AND TENANCIES

The following are the most common types of letting contracts, although there are some others. This guide is not intended to make you a legal expert and you should always seek advice rather than make assumptions about the agreement you are going to sign.

You can bring your contract in to the Housing Office or Student Advice Centre; we're not legally trained but we can identify any items you need to query and clarify any clauses for you. Any responsible landlord will allow you time to get the tenancy checked over before you sign it.

### JOINT TENANCY

If a group of you are renting a property together and you are all named on the contract it is likely that you will have what is called a 'joint tenancy'.

A joint tenancy means you are each liable for the whole of the rent for the property and for any other obligations under the tenancy.

For example: there is a group of four tenants on a joint tenancy for 9 months and one tenant decides to leave in the sixth month because they have decided to give up university. Each joint tenant was paying an equal share of the rent. In this case the landlord is entitled to collect the shortfall in rent from any or all of the remaining tenants. It will then be up to these tenants to recover this money from the missing tenant.

In the above circumstances, the best solution is for the leaving tenant to find someone to replace them. If they are able to do this, everyone (remaining tenants, leaving tenant, replacement tenant and landlord) should then sign an Assignment document. This will allow the existing contract to continue under the same terms and conditions as before, but just with different people. The leaving tenant will be completely released from the contract.

### INDIVIDUAL TENANCY

Some landlords will issue an individual tenancy. This means that you are only liable for the rent on your room but have access to the joint facilities of the property (bathroom, kitchen etc).

The disadvantages of this type of agreement are that:

- If someone leaves, you do not have any say over who replaces them.
- Because you only have a tenancy for your room, the landlord can have relatively free access to common parts of the property. (bathroom, kitchen etc)

### TENANCY LENGTH

Most contracts are either 6 or 12 months in length. It is unlikely that a landlord will offer a tenancy that only covers the period you are actually at University (approx. 37 weeks).

### GUARANTORS

Many private landlords/letting agents require a 3rd party to act as a guarantor for rent payments before agreeing to rent to a student. A guarantor is someone who the landlord would contact if you didn't pay your rent. It is important that the guarantor checks the tenancy agreement to understand what they may be liable for.

If you do not have a guarantor, you may wish to look into companies such as [Housing Hand](#) and [Your Guarantor](#) who may be able to help.

## SUMMER RETAINERS

Some landlords will offer reduced rent over the summer months. Usually they would charge half rent for either 4, 8 or 12 weeks. You would need to check whether you would still be able to access the property or leave belongings there during that time.

Student Landlords are not obliged to offer a Retainer but may be open to negotiation.

## HOLDING DEPOSIT

Some landlords or letting agencies will charge a holding deposit (sometimes known as a retainer). This is a payment to hold the property for you whilst you decide if you want it. The terms of this agreement depend on the wording but usually once you have paid a holding deposit the agent / landlord should not then show the property to any other prospective tenants.

If you then decide not to take the property you will lose this deposit because the agent / landlord will argue that they have lost rent by not renting to someone else whilst you were making your mind up. This means you should only pay a holding deposit if you are fairly sure you want to accept the property.

You should always look carefully at the holding deposit agreement. In some cases it could actually commit you to taking the property even before you have signed a tenancy.

**Remember: agencies cannot charge a fee for simply putting your name on their books or giving you details of properties to rent.**

## DAMAGE DEPOSITS AND THE TENANCY DEPOSIT PROTECTION SCHEME

A damage deposit (or tenancy deposit) is usually payable at the time you sign a tenancy agreement. If you have signed an Assured Shorthold Tenancy (AST), then your deposit will be protected by the Tenancy Deposit Protection Scheme (ask if you are unsure).

This scheme came into action on April 6 2007 and you need to make sure that you find out from your landlord how they are protecting your deposit. If you have an AST but your landlord is not part of a scheme then they face high penalties so you must check. The landlord will either hold onto the deposit and pay a fee to a scheme to insure it (Insurance based scheme) or place the deposit into a scheme for the duration of the tenancy (Custodial based scheme).

The withholding of deposits at the end of the tenancy can be one of the most contentious issues when renting a property. A landlord can make reasonable deductions from the deposit for:

1. Damage to the property
2. Unpaid rent
3. Missing items
4. Cleaning

This must all be stipulated in the contract at the start of the tenancy to avoid discrepancies. If there are any disagreements regarding the return of the deposit, then the scheme which either holds or insures the amount will return the undisputed amount to the tenant. It is then advisable for the landlord and tenant to seek help from an Independent Dispute Resolution service which work with the deposit scheme.

It is essential that you complete a thorough inventory before you move in. It is a good idea to take photos.

The deposit is usually equivalent to one month's rent for a tenancy (although it can be anything up to two months) and slightly less if you are renting a room from a resident landlord.

A landlord should return your deposit within a reasonable time after the end of the tenancy. You should usually expect to receive the deposit back, minus any necessary deductions, within 28 days of the end of your tenancy.

For further information visit:

[england.shelter.org.uk/get\\_advice/paying\\_for\\_a\\_home/tenancy\\_deposits/deposit\\_protection\\_schemes](http://england.shelter.org.uk/get_advice/paying_for_a_home/tenancy_deposits/deposit_protection_schemes)

## RIGHT TO RENT CHECKS

Before you can rent a home, the landlord or letting agent must check that you are eligible to live in the UK. They will ask to see your passport and any other official documents that prove your immigration status. They will also take copies of the document which they need to keep passed your tenancy end date.

It is imperative that landlords do not assume anyone's status and so all potential residents will be asked to bring their passport in. The landlord will need to see the original passport and cannot accept a scan or photocopy without it.

# 10 MOVING IN & MOVING OUT

THE LIST BELOW INDICATES A FEW THINGS YOU NEED TO REMEMBER TO DO WHEN MOVING IN.

## **Complete an inventory on the day you move in**

The inventory is used when looking at the condition of the property at the end of the letting agreement. Some deterioration is allowed (fair wear and tear) but if the walls are covered in blu-tack stains at the end of the agreement, unless the inventory shows that those stains were there when you moved in, you could get charged for re-painting. Make sure that both you and the landlord have a signed copy for your records.

## **Council Tax**

In order to ensure you are exempt from paying council tax, each tenant will need to print off your Student Status Certificate from the 'My Record' section of the Intranet and send it to: Council Tax Department, City Offices, Colebrook St, Winchester, SO23 9LJ.

## **Gas & Electricity readings**

Even if your bills are covered in your rent, you should still really take a meter reading for the day you move in as this is how the charges are calculated. If you are responsible for paying the bills then you must make sure you contact the utility company ASAP.

## **TV Licence**

Make sure you set up your TV licence in order to avoid a fine. The current cost is £150.50. For more information and to purchase a license visit: [www.tvlicensing.co.uk](http://www.tvlicensing.co.uk)

## **Insurance**

This is essential as the cost of the average burglary is a lot more than the cost of average contents insurance. Check to see whether you're covered under your parent or guardians policy.

## **Parking**

In some areas of Winchester permit parking is in operation. If you require a permit to park at your property you should contact Winchester City council Parking Office ([www.winchester.gov.uk](http://www.winchester.gov.uk)). Visitor permits and scratch cards are also available.

## **Meet your neighbours**

It is always a good idea to maintain good relationships with your neighbours. Do this by introducing yourselves and make sure they feel comfortable approaching you if they have any issues with your house. If you are planning on arranging a special event, make sure you let them know first, or better still, invite them along!

THE LIST BELOW INDICATES A FEW THINGS YOU NEED TO REMEMBER TO DO WHEN MOVING OUT:

## **Complete a check out inventory**

It is not enough to just have a record of the contents and condition of the property at the start of the tenancy, you should make sure you have a check out inventory done at the end of the tenancy as well.

## **Clean the property**

Ideally you should clean the property thoroughly about two weeks before the end of the tenancy and then arrange for the landlord / agent to visit. This will give you both an opportunity to discuss any matters which may need attention before the tenancy ends.

## **Remove excess rubbish**

Make sure that you don't leave lots of rubbish outside your property. If bags are left outside the bins then they will not be collected and you may be charged for their removal. You can take any excess rubbish to the Household waste collection site in Bar End or call Biffa on 01962 670706 and arrange a collection (they will make a charge).

## **Key**

Make sure you return the key at the end of the tenancy and have proof that you have done so.

## **Meter readings**

Make sure you note down your final meter readings and contact your utility supplier with the details.

## **Post**

Ensure that you change your address on any usual post you receive so that you receive it once you've moved out. If you are receiving post for previous tenants, you just need to mark it 'Return to Sender' and pop it in the post box.

# 11 SAFETY AT HOME

According to the 'Complete University Guide', Winchester ranks as one of the safest University cities in the UK, however things can still go wrong. If you follow these tips you have less chance of becoming another statistic.

[www.thecompleteuniversityguide.co.uk/crime-rates-in-university-cities-and-towns](http://www.thecompleteuniversityguide.co.uk/crime-rates-in-university-cities-and-towns)

## **House hunting**

Never visit a property alone and try to avoid viewing after dark if possible. Check the route to and from the property and be aware of any possible danger areas nearby.

## **Know the risk**

Twice as many burglaries happen in private homes than in Halls of Residence. Make sure you lock all doors and that all ground floor windows have locks fitted.

## **Lock it up**

Half of all burglaries happen on the spur of the moment through unlocked doors or windows. Always lock your door.

## **Don't Show it off**

Make sure your TV, DVD, Stereo, Computer and other valuables can't be seen from the window. Never leave cash lying around.

## **Keys**

Don't leave spare keys outside, or in a garage or shed. Keep all house and car keys out of sight in the house. Make sure that any keys you are given by your landlord do not have the address of the property on.

## **Insurance**

The average cost of a student burglary is £900. Insurance is a lot cheaper! Make sure all your valuable items are insured and keep a note of the make, model and serial numbers of your electronic items to help police track them down if they are stolen.

## **UV Marking**

Use an ultraviolet pen to mark your stuff with your name and postcode.

## **Holidays**

Try to take all your valuables home with you during Christmas, Easter and summer vacations. If you can't, arrange for them to be held in secure storage or left with a friend.

## **Safety First**

If you see signs of a break-in at your property – like smashed windows or open doors – don't go in. Go to a friend or neighbour's house and call the police.

If you need any advice about security whilst at university, contact [security@winchester.ac.uk](mailto:security@winchester.ac.uk)

Emergency and useful contacts	
<b>Police, Fire, Ambulance (Emergency)</b>	Tel: 999
<b>Police (non-emergency)</b>	Tel: 101
<b>NHS advice</b>	Tel: 111 & 111.nhs.uk
<b>Victim Support</b>	Tel: 0808 168 9111 www.victimsupport.org.uk
<b>CrimeStoppers</b>	Tel: 0800 555 111 crimestoppers-uk.org
<b>Rape and Sexual Abuse counselling (Winchester)</b>	Tel: 01962 868 688/01962 864 433 Anonymous SMS Helpline Tel: 07860 027 793
<b>Drugs Advice</b>	www.talktofrank.com
<b>Drinkaware, Alcohol Advice</b>	Tel: 020 7766 9900 www.drinkaware.co.uk
<b>Samaritans</b>	Tel: 116 123 jo@samaritans.org
<b>Nightline</b>	Tel: 0207 631 0101 listening@nightline.org.uk Instant Messaging: nightline.org.uk

## 12 DEALING WITH PROBLEMS

Unfortunately, problems can occur when renting in the private rented sector, but hopefully, as long as you read through this guide, you will be better equipped to deal with them.

Make sure you keep everything in writing. If your landlord tells you they will do something, ask them to put that in writing for you – an email is sufficient and can be better as it would show the date of agreement.

Get advice as soon as possible. If you're not sure how to deal with a situation then ask. You don't want to fall out with your landlord just because you have misunderstood something in the contract. Student Housing Services can give you advice.

### REPAIRS

Whatever sort of contract you have signed the landlord has a duty to carry out certain repairs. The Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 obliges a landlord to repair the structure and exterior of the premises. The Act also covers disrepair to the heating, water supply and toilet system. If a landlord does not carry out repairs within a reasonable period of time, you may be able to make a claim against them for financial damages. Your local authority is able to intervene in disputes involving disrepair.

The whole issue of repair is quite complex and would need another guide to cover in full. If you wish to find out more there is a publication produced by Communities and Local Government available free of charge:

Repairs (a guide for landlords and tenants)

[www.communities.gov.uk/publications/housing/repairsguide?view=Standard](http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/housing/repairsguide?view=Standard)



## SAFEGUARDING YOUR DEPOSIT

- Ensure your landlord has protected your deposit in line with the Tenancy Deposit Scheme (page 11).
- Make sure you have completed a full and detailed inventory (page 12).
- Note down any repairs which are outstanding when you move in and pass these to the landlord.
- Report any damage done to the property and sort out the cost of repair straight away.
- Thoroughly clean the property – ensure the property is cleaned to the same level as when you moved in.

If any of your deposit is withheld and you are not happy with this then you must contact the Deposit scheme provider who will advise how you should contest any charges.

## 13 FAQs

There is a lot to consider when house-hunting. Hopefully the FAQs below will help you, but please contact Student Housing (details overleaf) if you have any questions.

### WHERE CAN I FIND THE ONLINE PROPERTY SEARCH?

We start advertising private landlord and university managed properties in January via [www.winchesterstudentpad.co.uk](http://www.winchesterstudentpad.co.uk) Students will need to contact Student Housing to get the password to gain access to the property adverts, this is to ensure that University of Winchester students have exclusive access to the website.

### IS THERE ENOUGH OFF CAMPUS ACCOMMODATION FOR ALL STUDENTS?

Although we don't have complete numbers of properties available, we never have groups of un-housed students. The first rush to find properties is in January, however new properties are added to the list throughout the rest of the academic year and some people start looking before Christmas. Some agencies may tell you that there is a shortage to encourage you to sign up. **(Don't listen to rumours; if you're unsure, come and see Student Housing Services).**

### ARE THERE MANY PROPERTIES AVAILABLE FOR SMALL GROUPS OR COUPLES?

The majority of properties advertised for students are 4-5 bedrooms in size. Groups of 3 may struggle to find a property and may find that they are more expensive. Consider expanding your group to allow you more choice. You can advertise for more housemates on the Intranet. If you are looking for a 2 or 3 bed, it may be easier to go through a letting agent who may have more availability but do be aware of higher monthly rent costs with fewer people sharing.

### I'M LOOKING FOR A ROOM NOT A WHOLE HOUSE . . .

Students who have available rooms will advertise them on the Intranet, Studentpad, through Facebook (Winchester student2student noticeboard) or through Student Housing, so make sure you have a look through and contact any that are of interest.

### I'VE SIGNED A CONTRACT BUT I WANT TO LEAVE/I'M LEAVING UNI . . .

If you have already signed a contract you are then bound to its terms and conditions, including the payment of rent, for its full term. With permission from your landlord, you should be able to try and find a replacement for your room. You can advertise through Student Housing, on Facebook on the Intranet and on Studentpad. Make sure you let your landlord and your housemates know when you've found your replacement.

### DO I HAVE TO PAY COUNCIL TAX?

If you are a full time student then you will be exempt, but you must let Winchester City Council know. Print off your student status certificate which can be found on the Intranet by searching 'Student Status'. Send it to 'Council Tax Department, City Offices, Colebrook Street, Winchester, SO23 9LJ'. The office is just behind the Guildhall in town if you'd prefer to take it personally.

## OUR LANDLORD KEEPS COMING ROUND UNANNOUNCED . . .

When you sign a contract for a property it is expected that you should have 'quiet enjoyment' of it. If the landlord needs to visit your property then they must give you at least 24 hours' notice and you are able to ask the reason for their visit.

If your landlord is not keeping to their obligation then you can complain, in writing, directly to them (or the managing agent). You can also contact Student Housing Services who would be able to write to the landlord on your behalf.

## ONE OF OUR HOUSEMATES ISN'T PULLING THEIR WEIGHT, WHAT CAN I DO?

If you are having trouble with a housemate, then the first thing you should do is to talk to them. We understand this is difficult and can be uncomfortable but that housemate needs to know if there is a problem.

Come in and discuss the problem with Student Services or Student Housing as well as we will be able to advise on good ways to combat inter-tenant problems; this may include a meeting facilitated by us.

# 14 RESOURCES AND CONTACT INFORMATION

## STUDENT HOUSING SERVICES

The University of Winchester  
St Swithuns Lodge room 1  
King Alfred Campus  
Tel: 01962 827533  
[housing@winchester.ac.uk](mailto:housing@winchester.ac.uk)  
Open 9am-5pm Monday-Thursday,  
9am-4.30pm Friday for walk in  
enquiries

## STUDENT SERVICES

The Zone, Main Building  
Tel: 01962 827341  
[student.services@winchester.ac.uk](mailto:student.services@winchester.ac.uk)

## STUDENT FINANCE

Main Building  
Tel: 01962 827226  
[credit.control@winchester.ac.uk](mailto:credit.control@winchester.ac.uk)

## WINCHESTER CITY COUNCIL

Colebrook Street, Winchester  
[www.winchester.gov.uk](http://www.winchester.gov.uk)  
Tel: 01962 840222

## ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Tel: 01962 848367  
[environment@winchester.gov.uk](mailto:environment@winchester.gov.uk)

## BIFFA

for information on bulk rubbish  
collection  
Tel: 01962 828412

## PEST CONTROL

Tel: 01962 848594

## COUNCIL TAX

Tel: 01962 848288  
[counciltax@winchester.gov.uk](mailto:counciltax@winchester.gov.uk)

## SHARED HOUSING ACCREDITATION SCHEME

Tel: 01962 848381

## PARKING PERMITS

Colebrook Street, Winchester  
Tel: 01962 848346  
[parking@winchester.gov.uk](mailto:parking@winchester.gov.uk)

## CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

The Winchester Centre  
68, St. Georges St,  
Winchester, SO23 8AH  
Tel: 01962 848000  
[www.adviceguide.org.uk](http://www.adviceguide.org.uk)

## SHENTONS SOLICITORS

Staple Gardens, Winchester  
Tel: 01962 844544  
[www.shentons.co.uk](http://www.shentons.co.uk)  
[main@shentons.co.uk](mailto:main@shentons.co.uk)

## SHELTER

[www.shelter.org.uk](http://www.shelter.org.uk)

## GOV.UK

For tenancy advice booklets and  
information on the New Housing Bill  
and The Health and Safety Rating  
System.  
[www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk)

## HEALTH AND SAFETY EXECUTIVE

For information on gas safety and  
electrical safety  
[www.hse.gov.uk](http://www.hse.gov.uk)  
Tel: 08701 545500

## OFFICE OF FAIR TRADING

For information on unfair terms in  
consumer contracts. [www.offt.gov.uk](http://www.offt.gov.uk)  
Tel: 08457 22 44 99

## TV LICENSING

For information on getting a TV  
licence.  
[www.tvlicensing.co.uk](http://www.tvlicensing.co.uk)

# HOUSE HUNTING CHECKLIST

MAKE SURE YOU ASK PERMISSION BEFORE TAKING PHOTOS

## PROPERTY 1

Address .....

.....

Landlord's name and contact number.....

.....

How much is the deposit and when is it payable? .....

When can you move in?.....

Do you need to pay over the summer period – is the rent reduced?.....

Are there any other fees to pay – what are they for?.....

.....

Is the property accredited (houses advertised on [www.winchesterstudentpad.co.uk](http://www.winchesterstudentpad.co.uk) will be, if the landlord does not have proof on their person, you can check with the Housing Office

.....

Are the relevant gas/electrical safety certificates available? (houses advertised on [www.winchesterstudentpad.co.uk](http://www.winchesterstudentpad.co.uk) will have these, if the landlord does not have them on their person, you can check with the Housing Office

.....

What furniture is provided?.....

Is there an internet connection – do tenants set it up or is it included in the rent?.....

What size are the bedrooms?.....

Is there parking available?.....

What is the general state of the property?.....

Who maintains the garden?.....

.....

Questions for the current tenants – how are the neighbours, what's the landlord like, have they enjoyed living in the house, are there shortcuts to Uni etc?

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# HOUSE HUNTING CHECKLIST

MAKE SURE YOU ASK PERMISSION BEFORE TAKING PHOTOS

## PROPERTY 2

Address .....

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Landlord's name and contact number.....

.....

How much is the deposit and when is it payable? .....

When can you move in? .....

Do you need to pay over the summer period – is the rent reduced?.....

Are there any other fees to pay – what are they for?.....

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Is the property accredited (houses advertised on [www.winchesterstudentpad.co.uk](http://www.winchesterstudentpad.co.uk) will be, if the landlord does not have proof on their person, you can check with the Housing Office

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Are the relevant gas/electrical safety certificates available? (houses advertised on [www.winchesterstudentpad.co.uk](http://www.winchesterstudentpad.co.uk) will have these, if the landlord does not have them on their person, you can check with the Housing Office

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What furniture is provided? .....

Is there an internet connection – do tenants set it up or is it included in the rent? .....

What size are the bedrooms? .....

Is there parking available? .....

What is the general state of the property? .....

Who maintains the garden? .....

.....

Questions for the current tenants – how are the neighbours, what's the landlord like, have they enjoyed living in the house, are there shortcuts to Uni etc?

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# HOUSE HUNTING CHECKLIST

MAKE SURE YOU ASK PERMISSION BEFORE TAKING PHOTOS

## PROPERTY 3

Address .....

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Landlord's name and contact number.....

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How much is the deposit and when is it payable? .....

When can you move in? .....

Do you need to pay over the summer period – is the rent reduced?.....

Are there any other fees to pay – what are they for?.....

.....

Is the property accredited (houses advertised on [www.winchesterstudentpad.co.uk](http://www.winchesterstudentpad.co.uk) will be, if the landlord does not have proof on their person, you can check with the Housing Office

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Are the relevant gas/electrical safety certificates available? (houses advertised on [www.winchesterstudentpad.co.uk](http://www.winchesterstudentpad.co.uk) will have these, if the landlord does not have them on their person, you can check with the Housing Office

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What furniture is provided? .....

Is there an internet connection – do tenants set it up or is it included in the rent? .....

What size are the bedrooms? .....

Is there parking available? .....

What is the general state of the property? .....

Who maintains the garden? .....

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Questions for the current tenants – how are the neighbours, what's the landlord like, have they enjoyed living in the house, are there shortcuts to Uni etc?

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UNIVERSITY OF  

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WINCHESTER

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Winchester, SO22 4NR

01962 827533

[housing@winchester.ac.uk](mailto:housing@winchester.ac.uk)