



Landlord Direct
34 Musters Road, West Bridgford,
Nottingham, NG2 7PL
0115 9696355



Tenant Handbook

If you require any further information, need to report any repairs or maintenance issues, or have any accounts queries, please visit www.apartments4students.co.uk homepage and click on the link.

Tenant Zone

or e-mail: lettings@landlorddirect.com

or accounts@landlorddirect.com

Office Opening Hours: 9.00am - 5.00pm (Mon - Fri) Tel: 0115 9696355

Utilities (For Non-All Inclusive Rents Only)

Gas, Electricity & Water

You are responsible for paying **ALL** of your utility bills throughout the **entire** duration of your tenancy, unless otherwise stated in your Tenancy Agreement. The first thing you should do when you move into your new accommodation is to read the meters. These are usually located in areas such as cellars, kitchen cupboards or under the stairs.

Next, you should contact your utility companies to provide them with the readings and to ensure that you are listed on the database as the person(s) now responsible for paying the bills. Your current supplier, if known, will be listed on your inventory. Failing that, you can find who supplies you by calling Transco on 0870 608 1524 (gas) or East Midlands Electricity's MPAS Team on 0845 6030618 (electricity). In all cases, your water will be supplied by Severn Trent who can be contacted on 0845 7 500 500. Alternatively, you could contact **Tenant Shop** on 0845 2697415, who will be able to provide you with this information, and may also be able to offer savings on your utility bills.

The person who requests the supply is liable to pay. It is recommended that you sign an agreement between yourselves setting out each persons liability for payment of bills in the event of a later dispute. When you receive a bill, it may be appropriate to check to see if the meters have been read. If the bill has been estimated, an [E] will appear by the reading, and you should therefore phone in the correct reading immediately.

Failure to pay bills on time will attract a red reminder letter. If you ignore this then the service or supply may be disconnected. If you are having difficulty in paying the bill, contact the relevant utility company without delay. It may be possible to negotiate to spread the payment over a period of time.

Council Tax (For ALL Tenancies)

You will be responsible for paying the council tax for the entire duration of your tenancy. However, full time students, living in shared accommodation solely occupied by students, will be fully exempt from paying Council Tax. It is vitally important that you notify your local authority of who is occupying your property however, as failure to do so may result in a large Council Tax bill for which you will be liable. Similarly, if your status should change during the course of your tenancy and the exemption is no longer applied, all joint tenants will become liable for any council tax due.

Please note, that some Councils may charge council tax to final year students once their course has finished, or possibly even for periods in between courses (for example, after the completion of a degree and before the start of a Masters course). It is important to check with the Council regarding your liability, as these periods may coincide with the dates of your Tenancy and Council Tax may therefore be due from you.

The authority will ask for evidence of your student status and they will be able to advise you accordingly. Contact your relevant council offices on the following number and ask to speak to the Council Tax department.

Rushcliffe Borough Council (West Bridgford) Tel: 0115 981 99 11

or visit www.ntu.ac.uk/counciltax

Nottingham City Council (City Centre) Tel: 0115 915 55 55

or visit www.nottingham.ac.uk/student-services/officialdocuments

Please note that you will be asked to provide proof to your Management Agent that you have registered the property under your name and have obtained the necessary Council Tax exemption at the end of your Tenancy.

Telephone & Communications

If you wish to be connected to a telecommunications service, you must be aware that certain subscriptions or new installations may require a wayleave agreement to be signed by the landlord or agent before they can be installed. If the property already has a telephone connection socket, it is likely that you will only have to pay for a reconnection charge, but any costs incurred for any of the above will be the sole responsibility of the tenants.

If you are moving into an apartment block which does not have a communal satellite dish, you **will not** be allowed to have your own dish installed in the apartment, as this is likely to contravene the conditions of the Head Lease and you may be in breach of the conditions of your tenancy.

TV Licence

The law is very clear that each household with a TV capable of receiving broadcasts (including SKY or cable) must have a TV Licence. One licence covers any number of sets in a single household, and students with a joint tenancy are likely to be classed in this fashion. More information and details of how to obtain a licence can be acquired from your local post office.

Final Bills (Where Applicable)

All of the above information is relevant to the end of your tenancy. You will be contractually obliged to provide your management agent with copies of all final paid utility bills, a copy of your Council Tax Exemption Certificate or evidence that the council tax is fully paid.

If a deposit has been paid on the property, then this cannot be returned until all of the above have been received, and so it is in your best interests to ensure that all of these are set up and concluded properly.

[Rent & Deposit Payments](#)

Payment of Rent

It is a condition of your tenancy that all rent must be paid by bank standing order on the same agreed day of each month, unless otherwise agreed. Although rent may be collected from you individually, joint tenants - where applicable - are jointly and severally liable for the payment of the total balance. You will be notified if arrears occur but it is important for *all* of you that *all* of the rent is paid on the due date.

Late payment of rent will attract a charge. ***Please remember that it is not the responsibility of the agent to collect or chase rent, but the contractual obligation of the tenant(s) to ensure that the money is paid.*** Administration costs are incurred every time a rent reminder has to be sent, and so it is in the best interests of the tenant to keep their agent fully informed. Rent arrears letters will be charged at £25.00 + VAT each if the rent is overdue by more than 14 days.

If there is a genuine reason why you have missed or are likely to miss a rent payment, it is essential that your management agent is notified immediately. Situations are only made worse when your agent is not made aware of a problem, and where there are mitigating circumstances, we will always try and help you to re-schedule a payment.

Failure to Pay Rent

Continued failure to pay rent is likely to result in a Notice Seeking Possession being served on your property. **Further administrative charges will be made to tenants if this course of action has to be followed.** Regardless of who has failed to make their payment, action can only be taken against all of the tenants, as you have a joint tenancy. If, after 14 days, the arrears are not cleared in full, it is likely that court action will commence to recover the outstanding amount, possession of the property and court costs.

If a court judgement is made against you it will affect your ability to not only obtain credit but also to secure accommodation elsewhere, either in the private rented sector or to obtain a mortgage, until the debt, court costs and any accrued interest on these debts has been cleared in full.

For rent or payment queries you should contact our Accounts Department on 0115 969 6355 (option 3) or e-mail accounts@landlorddirect.com

Deposit Payments (Where Applicable)

Landlord Direct are members of The Dispute Service and all deposits are registered with this government approved scheme. It should be noted that deposit payments are completely separate from rent payments. They are held on behalf of tenants and returned at the end of the tenancy, subject to the terms and conditions of the tenancy agreement being adhered to.

Deposits will not be returned until all of the keys to the property have been returned, all of the rent has been paid, and all of the copies of Final Paid Bills have been received. A more detailed guideline for your deposit return will be sent to you towards the end of your tenancy, or can be requested in advance from your management agent.

Please note that deposits may not be used at any time to replace rent payments, and any outstanding rent balances will be chased separately as rent arrears.

Repairs & Maintenance

Procedures

In the event that your property may require repairs or maintenance during the course of your tenancy, the following procedure should be observed to enable us to process your request quickly and efficiently.

For all repairs and maintenance issues please contact us through our online tenant zone at:-

www.apartment4students.co.uk ('Report a Repair' option)

You will be advised of a job number which you should quote in any further communication. Property maintenance will be categorised in order of priority and importance, as below:-

- 1) Emergency Repairs
- 2) Statutory Repairs

3) Tenants' Requests

Emergency Repairs

Emergency Repairs relate to matters arising which may be considered dangerous to the tenants, which may result in significant damage, or which may compromise the security of the property. More often than not, these issues revolve around the utility supplies to the property. i.e. Gas, electricity and water.

In the event that such problems may arise outside of the normal office opening hours of your management agent, tenants would be expected to act in a 'reasonable' manner to make the property and its installations safe.

Each of your utility companies will have a freephone emergency number to call, but you should make sure that these are used appropriately depending on the nature of your problem.

Emergency Telephone Numbers

Gas	Transco	Tel: 0800 111 999
Electricity	All Suppliers	Tel: 0800 056 80 90
Water	Severn Trent	Tel: 0800 783 4444
Glazing	CT Glass & Glazing	Tel: 07512 530807
Locksmith	Nottingham Locksmiths	Tel: 0115 9472214
General	D Brown Maintenance	Tel: 07584 563 117

Gas

All rented accommodation with gas appliances must be issued with a Gas Safety Certificate. If this is not present in the property then you should request a copy from your management agent.

If you smell gas and are concerned about a possible leak then you should call Transco on the above number. However, it must be pointed out that Transco will not *test* your appliances, they will simply switch off your supply until a Gas Safe registered engineer can re-test the system.

If you suspect a gas leak in your property, open as many doors and windows as you can. **DO NOT** USE ANY ELECTRICAL SWITCHES. **DO NOT** SMOKE. VACATE THE PROPERTY.

Tenants are often alerted to potential problems with gas appliances via carbon monoxide detectors. Although the use of these detectors is encouraged and recommended, tenants can often make the mistake of situating them within the extreme vicinity of gas appliances, thus causing them to give inaccurate readings. Ideally, such detectors should not be placed directly above, below, or to the immediate side of cookers or boilers.

Electricity

If the electricity in your property should become faulty, you should first try and identify the source or cause of your problem. Ask yourself the following question, 'Have all of the electrics in the house, including the lights, stopped working?' If the answer is 'no' then it is probable that your fuse box has tripped a fuse.

This can often be caused by overloading sockets with too many electrical appliances, particularly those which have a heating elements in them (e.g. kettles, electric fires, hairdryers etc.). If this is the case, then the problem can often be rectified by simply flipping the switch on the fuse box, often located in a cellar, kitchen or under the stairs.

If the answer to the first question is 'yes', then it is probable that your property has suffered a power failure. If this has occurred then all other properties in your area will also be without electricity. If the situation persists you should call your electricity supplier to ascertain the nature and extent of the problem. **Remember, if you are in any doubt then you should contact your management agent at your earliest opportunity, who will advise you on the best course of action.**

Water

If your property springs a leak from any of the plumbing installations, (i.e. taps, baths, sinks, toilets, pipes etc.), you must first turn off your water supply at the main stop cock. This is often situated under sinks, in ground floor bathrooms or generally where the water supply enters the house, and should be turned clockwise until the water shuts off. This will prevent the situation getting any worse, until a competent plumber can be present to attend to the problem.

It is also helpful to run both the hot and cold taps in the property, as this helps to drain the pipes and any water storage tanks, alleviating any water stored in the system.

The other major problem that can be created by water is through roof or gutter leaks, often emphasised by heavy rain. These should be reported immediately, but will only be treated as an emergency if water is penetrating the exterior of the building and causing damage to the interior. It must be remembered that roofing contractors can only attend to these types of problems when the weather conditions will allow.

Security

Sadly, we do not live in a crime-free society and it is not unheard of for some properties to be exposed to this criminal element. If your property should be unfortunate enough to be subjected to a burglary or attempted break-in, you should report this immediately to the police. They will issue you with a crime number which should be retained for future reference.

The incident must also be reported at the earliest opportunity to your management agent. You will be sent a crime report letter for completion, allowing all necessary related works to be charged to your Landlords insurance. Your management agent will also be able to arrange for any necessary repairs to be arranged, in order to secure the property.

Please note that if such an incident should occur outside of office hours, then it is recommended that tenants contact the appropriate emergency numbers above, or alternatively from the Yellow Pages, in order to deal with any glazing, locks or doors that need immediate attention. If contractors costs need to be settled on completion then your management agent will reimburse this amount to you, upon receiving a copy of the invoice.

Statutory Repairs

Landlords have a statutory requirement to keep in good order the fixtures, fittings and appliances of their properties. If any of these should become broken or malfunction through no fault of the tenants, the landlord has an obligation to repair or replace these items.

This type of repair most commonly relates to items of furniture, such as wardrobes, cupboards etc. and to appliances such as cookers and fridge freezers. In the event of these repairs being required, tenants should contact their management agent to request the appropriate contractors to assess and/or attend to any problems.

Priority will obviously be given to faulty appliances and these should naturally be reported as soon as possible. Neither your Landlord nor your management agent will have any responsibility for consequential losses.

Please remember that contractors are not employed by your landlord or their management agent. It is not usually possible to attend to a repair on the same day that it is reported - unless it is an emergency - and realistic 'reasonable' timescales must be appreciated.

Tenants' Requests

This relates to requests that tenants may make to landlords for items or furnishings that are not present in the property (e.g. burglar alarms, showers etc.). In most cases properties are taken as seen, and the monthly rental figures will reflect the standard and level of furnishings that a property may include.

Tenants may often wish to decorate their own bedrooms or other rooms of the house. This may be done with the express written authorisation from the Landlord or Landlord's Agent and must be undertaken to an acceptable standard. Any decoration that has to be 'made good' at the end of the tenancy will be charged to the tenants' deposit(s).

n.b. one of the most common charges levied against tenants is for the redecoration of walls where blu-tac, drawing pins or nails have been used to put up posters, pictures etc., causing damage to walls beyond wear and tear.

The most successful method of requesting any additional improvements is to send a letter addressed to 'The Landlord', via your management agent, so that this can be considered. Your management agent does not have the authority to make these types of decisions or spend money on your Landlords behalf, and so no guarantees can be made that these requests will be met.

General Information

Keys

Obviously, you will be issued with a set of keys to the property when you move in. You may have internal keys to the property as well, which may alternatively be left in situ in the property for you upon your arrival.

It is very important that you look after your keys, as it will not always be possible for your management agent to lend you a spare set. It should be noted that your Management Agents **DO NOT** hold copies of internal keys, and call-outs to attend incidents where keys have been lost or misplaced will attract a charge to the tenants. If this loss of keys compromises the security of the property, the landlord may also request that the locks are changed, also at the expense of the tenants.

Fobs

If you are living in a development with secure entry building and car park fobs, these will also be issued to you when you collect the keys. It should be noted that we **DO NOT** hold spare fobs and therefore if they should become lost, stolen or broken during your tenancy, a replacement will need to be ordered and this may take a little time. Tenants will be responsible for the cost of these replacements, unless the original fob is returned to us and is deemed to be faulty.

Insurance

Landlords are required by law to insure their properties for the buildings and their own contents, fixtures and fittings. This does not however cover tenants for any of their belongings.

Personal contents insurance is recommended as a necessity and it is a false economy not to insure your possessions, particularly with the increase in valuable computing and entertainment systems that tenants now own. Some insurance companies do not insure students, or their policies may have exclusions or limitations that are unsuitable for your needs. However, more and more companies are providing policies that are specific to the market, and although the cost of premiums and the level of cover provided does vary, you should be able to find a policy that best suits your needs.

Tenancy Agreements

You have signed an Assured Shorthold Tenancy Agreement for your property on a joint tenancy basis. This means that you have a contract for a fixed term for which all the named tenants are jointly and severally liable for the terms and conditions of the agreement.

You are liable for the total rent, upkeep of the property and payment of all non-inclusive bills during the course of your tenancy. It is not possible to alter the terms of your agreement once it has been signed and it should not be assumed that you can just 'walk away' from your contract.

Please note that as tenants, you have a responsibility to hand back the property in good order (fair wear and tear excepted), clean and free from personal belongings, regardless of whether you have paid a deposit or not. Any works required over and above fair wear and tear will be invoiced to you and your guarantor.

If you require any further information then please feel free to contact our Lettings Department on 0115 969 6355
(Option 4)
or e-mail us at lettings@landlorddirect.com