

For immediate release: 29th July, 2002

INCREASED DEMAND FOR STUDENT ACCOMMODATION IMPACTS ON LOCAL HOUSING MARKETS

– Research shows more landlords renting and buying to let to students –

Research funded by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation and carried out by the Centre for Housing Policy at the University of York into the nature and impact on local rental markets of students attending higher education institutions (HEIs) has revealed a number of interesting facts and trends concerning the private rented sector (PRS).

The key findings from the research are:

- There has been a large increase in students in full-time higher education with no commensurate expansion in student accommodation provided by HEIs
- According to 60% of HEI accommodation officers surveyed this has led to an increased reliance on the PRS. On average twice as many students are living in private rented housing as there are in accommodation provided by their HEI.
- Landlords are increasingly turning to students for tenants because of the higher returns which can be obtained from a shared student household. More surprisingly, and debunking the 'Young Ones' myth, landlords see students as reliable tenants.

- Landlords are buying up properties to let in ‘student areas’ edging out other types of tenant. In addition, this influx of landlords has considerably affected house prices, pushing them up to the extent that many owner occupiers, first time buyers in particular, have been priced out of the market.

William Berry, director of Accommodation for Students (www.accommodationforstudents.com), the UK’s most advanced student accommodation search engine, said:

“This research confirms what we already suspected – that students are increasingly turning to the PRS for their housing requirements. More importantly, it shows the value of an online facility like ours which focuses on private rented accommodation and makes it easier for both students and landlords to achieve their accommodation objectives.

For the 10,000 students a week who visit our site they can specify their exact accommodation criteria and view on-site a selection of suitable properties from the thousands available. For landlords, they can upload their properties directly onto our site via an easy-to-use landlord admin suite. They can then follow and measure interest in and uptake of their properties. Vivaly, for both students and landlords the service is free providing a tremendous facility in this sector which is so under pressure.”

The research involved a UK-wide postal survey of all HEI accommodation officers; interviews with local government officials and HEI policy and student welfare officers in nine case study locations; interviews with landlords and letting agents in six locations. A full copy of the report is available from York Publishing Services.

About Accommodation for Students

Accommodation for Students Ltd. was founded by William Berry and Simon Thompson, ex-students from Manchester, in June 2000. The site went live in test phase in June 2001, prior to its full launch in January 2002.

The site's features include:

For Students

- A powerful search engine accessing a nationwide database of student accommodation properties
- An easy-to-use, comprehensive set of accommodation criteria, including geographical location, number of rooms (including required size of room), rent, interior facilities (from satellite/cable television to dishwasher), exterior facilities (from garden to off-street parking) and service facilities (eg CORGI registered gas central heating)
- Notice board facility
- Clipboard facility to save accommodation details
- Landlord email facility which sends an email to the landlord with one click when a student finds a property they like. The email specifies the house and student details and effects an introduction between the student and landlord.
- Chatroom to allow potential housemates to talk to each other and review house options.

For Landlords

- Sophisticated, user-friendly '**landlord admin suite**' which allows landlords to directly upload and edit their property details and pictures on the Accommodation for Students website. The unique measurement facility allows landlords to judge the effectiveness of

the website in attracting student interest to their properties and ultimately their letting.

- Easy contact system: Accommodation for Students '**email landlord service**'. This service enables students to send a generic email of interest to a landlord with one click. This also ensures the privacy of landlord email addresses.

Accommodation for Students Accolades

- Highly Commended in the Best Industry Innovation category at the inaugural 2002 Property Business Awards
- New Millennium Silver Award
"Accommodation for Students has been awarded the Silver Award. Good luck in the future and keep helping the students in the UK ", Corey Huffman, CEO, New Millennium's Award Programme
- EyeCatcher Bronze Award – 21st October 2001
83% score on Design, Creativity, Coding and Originality
- Best Of The Web 2001 Bronze Award
"I enjoyed surfing your site, and I am sure everybody else will too", Eric Nielsen, NEOVISION, Inc
- Critical Mass Award
"Congratulations! Your site definitely qualifies for the "Critical Mass Award". A very nice site, excellent design, tasteful original graphics, and you have provided visitors with content that is informative, entertaining, well-presented and easy to access. A worthy enterprise and a positive contribution to the Web", Bill Darling, Critical Mass
- Golden Web Award 2001–2002
"Congratulations on having your site selected to receive the 2001–2001 Golden Web Award!"
- Ranked joint Number 1 in the Student Accommodation Advice website review of student accommodation sites.

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