

For immediate release: Tuesday, 15th March 2005

**STUDENT RENTS IN THE UK GO UP BY 10% IN LAST
YEAR ACCORDING TO TOP WEBSITE, ACCOMMODATION
FOR STUDENTS**

– Good news for landlords around the country –

(London, 15/3/05) Accommodation for Students (www.accommodationforstudents.com), the UK's No 1 student accommodation website, has just released its latest research into the nationwide cost of rented student accommodation based on 19,000 properties in 60 university locations across the UK featured on its website. It reveals that the current average weekly rent for a student in the UK is now £57.66, a 10% increase since April 2004.

London continues to be the most expensive place to study by a long way, at an average weekly rent of £102, a massive 77% above average. Oxford, Guildford and Cambridge are the next most expensive locations with average weekly rents of £82, £81 and £79 respectively, 43%, 41%, and 38% higher than average. Best value locations in terms of student rental accommodation are the smaller student towns like Middlesbrough, Stoke and Wolverhampton with average weekly rents of £37, £38 and £39 respectively (see full UK table below).

This 10% increase represents good news for landlords as student rents have previously been slightly soft. Last year's average rent of £52.44 actually represented a fall of 3% on the 2003 figure of £53.80.

William Berry, co-founder and director of Accommodation for Students, said:

“Even better news for landlords is the major improvements for them that we have recently introduced onto our website. We have a new sophisticated and secure online payment system. At only £5 per month for the average landlord to advertise, this represents excellent value. We attract a quarter of a million unique users a month, a figure enhanced by our partnerships with other highly popular websites like MSN, with whom we are the preferred student accommodation partner.

All of this means that advertised landlord properties get filled very quickly indeed. Add to that new admin functionality, like multiple picture and property detail uploads for the larger landlords and letting agents, and few of our customers would ever dream of going back to conventional forms of advertising.”

But it's not only landlords who benefit from Accommodation for Student's new technology. The upgraded site also features new student benefits. The search facility has been improved to include searches by move-in dates and university, whilst the already popular Notice Board now allows student to upload pictures and profiles. Students, for a small fee of £1.50, can now even post a detailed notice

advertising a room to ensure better response. (They pay via a reverse SMS charge to their phone bill, which the student activates and confirms.)

About Accommodation for Students

Accommodation for Students Ltd. was founded by William Berry and Simon Thompson, graduates from Manchester Metropolitan University, in June 2000.

Partners

Accommodation for students is a content partner for MSN (MSN displays AFS content on its website) <http://afs.money.msn.co.uk>.

Accommodation for students is sponsored by STA Travel, Virgin Mobile, Saxon Insurance and Barclays Bank.

Accolades

- Nominated for Best Use of Web in 2004 New Media Age Awards.
- Highly Commended in the Best Industry Innovation category at the inaugural 2002 Property Business Awards

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, availability dates, interior facilities (from satellite/cable television to dishwasher), exterior facilities (from garden to off-street parking) and service facilities (e.g. CORGI registered gas central heating)
- Notice board facility with student profile and avatar features. Also detailed messaging services.
- Clipboard facility to save accommodation details
- Landlord e-mail facility which sends an e-mail to the landlord with one click when a student finds a property they like. The e-mail 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.
- Fully integrated online payment system with full transaction history and invoice reporting functionality.
- Multiple image and logo upload facility
- Easy contact system: Accommodation for Students '**e-mail landlord service**'. This service enables students to send a generic e-mail of interest to a landlord with one click. This also ensures the privacy of landlord email addresses.

APPENDIX

Table 1 – UK Student Rent Analysis, March 2005 (60 cities/19,000 properties)

City	Average Rent	Index*
Aberdeen	53	92
Bath	61	105
Belfast	53	93
Birmingham	52	89
Blackpool	52	89
Bolton	43	75
Bournemouth	60	104
Bradford	41	71
Brighton	67	115
Bristol	68	117
Canterbury	68	117
Cardiff	56	97
Carlisle	47	82
Cheltenham	53	92
Chester	61	105

Coventry	47	81
Derby	46	80
Devon	58	100
Dundee	45	77
Durham	51	88
Eastbourne	69	120
Edinburgh	68	118
Exeter	69	120
Glasgow	67	116
Guildford	81	141
Hatfield	63	110
Huddersfield	48	83
Hull	42	73
Kent	65	113
Lancaster	49	84
Leamington Spa	58	101
Leeds	55	95
Leicester	49	85
Lincoln	46	80
Liverpool	45	78
London	102	177
Loughborough	53	91
Luton	62	107
Manchester	49	85
Middlesbrough	37	64
Newcastle-O-T	54	94
Norwich	53	91
Nottingham	57	98
Oxford	82	143
Plymouth	55	95
Portsmouth	56	96
Preston	47	81
Reading	63	110
Salford	46	80
Sheffield	54	94
Southampton	58	101
Stafford	53	91

Stoke-on-Trent	38	65
Sunderland	45	79
Surrey	74	129
Swansea	56	97
Warwick	68	118
Winchester	65	113
Wolverhampton	39	67
York	56	97

*** Index compared to 2005 average UK student rental cost of £57.66**

- ENDS -

For further information, please contact:

Stewart Ross (Ross Media Relations)

Tel: 07966 540787

stewart@rossmediarelations.co.uk

William Berry (Accommodation for Students)

Tel: 07971 595 210

will@easyafs.com