



# FAQs

## STUDENT LETTINGS

### **How long are the tenancies?**

Contracts are usually available for either 48 weeks or 51 weeks. It is not normally possible to agree tenancies for shorter periods than 48 weeks. If you are looking for a shorter or longer let, you should discuss your requirements with CP Walker.

### **When does the tenancy start?**

Unless otherwise stated, the start date will be set by us to coincide with the end date of the previous tenancy. We require a minimum of 7 days between tenancies to complete the relevant inspections and organise cleaning and any other necessary work. If you have a specific date that you want the tenancy to start, discuss this with CP Walker.

### **How is the rent paid?**

Rent for each property is quoted on a weekly basis and is charged in four instalments. The first instalment is due 14 days before you are due to move in to the property. The amount of the initial instalment depends on the length of your tenancy; 6 weeks if you are taking a 48 week contract and 9 weeks if you are taking 51 weeks. Additional instalments are then due on 1 October (16 weeks), 1 February (16 weeks) and 1 May (10 weeks). This is to tie in with the dates for the payments of the Student Loan. If you are not being financed by Student Loan (e.g. by a Scholarship paid monthly) then it is sometimes possible to agree a variation to the way rent is paid. This should be discussed with CP Walker before you submit your application and before the contract is signed.

Rent payments are due by standing order (direct bank transfer). An invoice is provided to you when you complete your tenancy. You will need to arrange with your bank for the online payments to be set up accordingly. If your rent is going to be paid by a parent or other third party you should state this on your application form. If you are an overseas student without a UK bank account, the initial instalment should be paid by international bank transfer and further payments then made by Standing Order once you have set up your UK account. Our international bank details will be provided when you complete your tenancy.

Properties are advertised quoting a rent for the whole property. If as a group you decide to split the total rent unevenly (e.g. if people in the house with larger rooms are going to pay more rent) you should state this on the Application Form. We will then know how much rent to expect from each person. If you do not state this on your Application Form, we reserve the right to split the rent and charge each tenant in the way that we deem reasonable.

### **Do we sign a joint contract or individual agreements?**

If you are renting the property as a group then you will sign a joint tenancy. Although legally this makes each and every tenant liable for the whole amount of rent due for the property, landlords will usually view rent payments on an individual basis and hold each person liable only for their share of the rent. The liability of guarantors will be limited in the tenancy agreement to the monies due from the person they are guaranteeing only so they would not become responsible for the non payment of rent by one of your housemates.

Where properties are let room by room basis, you will sign an individual tenancy agreement. The agreement will state that you are responsible for payment of the stated amount of rent plus the relevant share of the bills associated with the property (if applicable). In a shared house (unless the bills are included in the rent), tenants within the house will then be responsible for splitting the bills and paying their share. If there is any dispute as to how any bill is to be split, the matter is referred to CP Walker who will determine the split and the decision will then be binding on all the parties.

All tenancy agreements are Assured Shorthold Tenancies granted under the provisions of the 1988 Housing Act. The basic terms and conditions of the tenancy are set out by statute. CP Walker's tenancy agreement has evolved through years of experience in letting student and professional properties. Sample copies of our Agreement are available on request. The Student Advice Centre in the Portland Building offers free advice to all students who are considering signing a Tenancy Agreement. Students can therefore seek their advice prior to completing our Tenancy Agreement.



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### **Are there any bills included in the rent?**

Unless otherwise stated on the property advertisement, rents are exclusive so you will have to pay utility and other charges associated with the property throughout the period of their tenancy. This includes gas, electricity, and water bills, Council Tax (if applicable), the TV licence, telephone and internet bills. The cost of bills will vary depending on the number of bedrooms and the frequency of use of heating etc.

### **Is it possible to have bills included in my rent?**

CP Walker can arrange for the utility bills (gas, water and electric) to be included within the rent. The price will vary property to property. Fixing your bills in your rent will not give you unlimited use of utilities but it will allow you to budget more accurately. There will be a "fair usage" allowance (usually around 50% over and above standard usage) and use over and above this level will be subject to an additional charge. Ask when you complete your application if you are interested in the bills inclusive option.

### **Gas and Electricity Bills**

When you move in to the property, we will take readings and we will notify the relevant suppliers of electricity and gas and water. After you have moved in and the accounts have been set up in your name (this process normally take 7-14 days), we advise that you speak with the suppliers to agree how you pay your bills. Utility bills are usually considerably cheaper if you take out contract and arrange to pay by direct debit. In any shared house you will need to agree how the bills are to be paid – i.e. who pays what.

### **Council Tax**

We will notify the appropriate Council that you have moved in to the property (Lenton, Dunkirk, Wollaton = Nottingham City, Beeston = Broxtowe). The Council will then usually write to you asking for payment of Council Tax. Students are usually exempt from Council Tax meaning that there is no charge payable. You will need to contact the Council confirming that you are a student following receipt of your bill. The University will usually provide a disk of names to the Council around October time and the Council will then usually check your name against this list. If you move in to a property prior to your course starting or move out after it has finished, the Council may wish to charge Council Tax for the period that you are not registered as a student. For further information on Students and Council Tax, visit <https://www.gov.uk/council-tax/full-time-students>.

If you are a Researcher or if you are not attending University or College for at least 24 weeks out of the year and for at least 21 hours per week during term time, you are likely to be required to pay Council Tax. Please bear this in mind when you are considering where and with whom to live. This can have significant financial consequences.

### **Internet, Phone and Satellite or Cable Television.**

We recommend that you start to arrange your services for internet, phone and cable or satellite TV (as required). There is always a lead in period before internet services etc. can be installed and ideally you should sign up with your chosen supplier about 4 weeks before you are due to move in. September is a very busy time of year with lots of students moving and failure to plan ahead can mean that you can be without internet for a number of weeks after the start of term. We will register you with Virgin Media after you have signed your contract. This will not commit you to signing a contract with them but it will give you a discount voucher that you can redeem if you do decide to use Virgin to supply internet, phone and/or TV.



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### **Who is responsible for repairs?**

The Landlord is responsible for the repair and maintenance of the property including any electrical items that are supplied with it. As Tenant, you are responsible for keeping the property in a clean and tidy condition and for any damage that is caused to the property. You are not responsible for normal wear or use of the property but you will be responsible if you cause damage over and above “fair wear and tear”. An Inventory & Schedule of Condition is agreed at the start of the tenancy to provide a record of the condition and contents. This document is then referred to at the end of the tenancy should any damages occur.

### **What is an Inventory?**

When or shortly after you move in to the property, you will be given an Inventory & Schedule of Condition to review. The Inventory lists the contents of the property and comments on the general condition. This then forms a record of the property and its contents at the start of the lease for the benefit of both parties during or at the end of the tenancy. You should check through the document and let us know if there any points that you are unhappy with within 7 days of receipt. The Inventory is not designed to record each and every blemish of each and every room – it designed to be a fair reflection of the state of the property at the start of the lease. If you want to add more detail then you can do this but you must do this at the start of the tenancy – not at the end. The form of Inventory allows you to add to any description or comment generally. Once the Inventory has been returned, we will review it and either agree to accept the modification or make an appointment to come out and review.

### **How much is the Deposit?**

The Deposit is charged at £300 per person (subject to a minimum of £600 per property). Students that are unable to provide a UK based guarantor may be required to pay a larger deposit.

The Deposit is held as security against the Tenant’s obligations under the terms of the lease, including any damage or cleaning required at the end of the period of occupation. If you have complied with the terms of the Tenancy Agreement, the Deposit will be returned in full following your vacation of the property. Otherwise, the balance of the Deposit will be returned once the work has been carried out or replacement items purchased. CP Walker is a member of the Tenancy Deposit Scheme, a UK government approved scheme for Deposits that helps to safeguard tenant’s money and ensure that any deductions are dealt with in a proper manner. Further details on this scheme are available at [www.thedisputeservice.co.uk](http://www.thedisputeservice.co.uk).

### **Who pays for damage caused?**

Tenants are responsible for any damage caused to the property or contents and for the replacement of any items missing from the Inventory. You are not responsible for normal wear and tear. If there are items damaged, then we will usually charge the person that has caused the damage. If we are unable to establish who has caused the damage, we will usually spread the cost between the tenants in the property. You should therefore disclose as and when damage occurs who has caused the damage to avoid being charged for damage caused by another person in the property.

### **What is the process for the return of the deposit at the end of the tenancy?**

At the end of the tenancy, you will need to arrange a Final Inspection once the house has been vacated. The condition of the property will then be checked against the Inventory agreed at the start. If there are no issues following, the Deposit can be returned quickly (usually within 15 working days of the Final Inspection). If there are issues to resolve, the Deposit can only be returned if costings have been agreed or once work has been completed.

If you are interested in finding out more about the procedure for the return of deposit, see our “FAQs - End of Tenancy”



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### **What are the most common deductions from a Deposit?**

#### **(a) Cleaning**

The cost of a standard clean usually equates to around £50 per person. At the end of the year you have the option of cleaning the house yourself or leaving and letting us clean after you have left. If you do decide to clean yourself, please be aware that you may still be charged for a top up clean if the cleaning isn't completed to the required standard.

#### **(b) Damage to decorations caused by Blu Tac**

The most common deduction after cleaning is for re-decoration of walls due to damage caused by posters and other pictures being placed on walls with Blu-Tack or similar adhesives. These adhesives leave oily marks and damage decoration. Costs of re-decoration are usually £50 per wall.

### **Guarantors and Overseas Students**

Students will be asked to provide a guarantor who will be responsible for any unpaid rent, damage or other charges that may become due. If you are not able to provide a guarantor, we will need to discuss alternative terms with you. Landlords may require more rent to be paid in advance and or a larger deposit to be paid based upon the specific circumstances. We would ask you to discuss your situation with us.

### **What furniture is provided?**

Properties come with the basic furnishings – bedrooms usually have a bed, desk, chair, wardrobe, drawers, bookshelf and bin. Kitchens come with basic appliances – usually oven and hob, fridge and washing machine. Some properties have dishwashers, dryers, microwaves, kettles and toasters. As contents vary property by property, interested parties should satisfy themselves on the level of furnishings prior to application. Additional furniture will not be provided once you have moved in.

We do not usually provide any pots and pans, kitchen utensils or crockery. In the bedrooms, we do not provide any sheets, duvets or pillows. You will need to bring these with you when you move in.

### **Can I bring my own furniture?**

Yes but the owners are not usually able to remove or store any of the existing furniture from the property.

### **Can more than one person live in the same room?**

Where properties are marketed on a room by room basis, we stipulate one person per room only. If you are a couple, then you would either need to rent two rooms in a shared property or find a one bedroom flat or other self contained property.

If you are taking a house as a group then we need applications from everyone that is planning on living in the property. You may be able to share a room if you are in a group but this will need to be discussed and agreed before you submit an application. We will need to assess whether there are sufficient amenities (e.g. bathrooms) in the house for the number of people that are proposing to live there. There may well be licensing or other legal issues that will need to be considered. This will depend upon the particular characteristics of each property – so it is important that you disclose how many people are going to be living in the property when you submit your application.

### **What condition can I expect the property to be in at the start of the tenancy?**

All properties will be professionally cleaned at the start of your contract. Sometimes there are items of work that are required when people move in to properties. We try to pick up most items during final inspections and deal with them prior to the start of the tenancy. If there is a short turn around between tenancies, this is not always possible. We would always endeavour to complete work but where there are only a few days between tenancies, this may make this process difficult. We will endeavour to keep you advised if there are issues like this when you are due to move in.



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If you find items when you move in, you should report these to our Repairs team using the FixFlo software (further details below). We would ask you to provide one complete list rather than each and every time you find something. Please also bear in mind that there are many people moving during the student turnaround and this will always cause a strain on the amount of work that has to be carried out. We will programme work according to urgency.

### **What happens if I have a maintenance issue with my property?**

If there is something wrong with your room or the property, you need to report this to the Repairs Team at CP Walker & Son. You should report these through the Fixflo software which you can bookmark on the home screen of your smart phone. You can visit the page at <https://c-p-walker-son.fixflo.com/Auth/HomeIssueCreate>. We use this software so we can be sure that you provide us with enough information so we can deal with the problem efficiently.

If you wish to speak with someone you can call our office during normal office hours (9am to 5.30pm Monday to Friday, 9am to 1pm on Saturday) or you can call us on 0115 925 4062 (emergency matters and handled 24/7 via this number). We are usually closed on Bank Holidays and hours of opening during holiday periods are published on our website. If you have any emergency repairs required at any time (even when the office is open), then you can call follow instructions provided on our website. They will take your details and determine whether the repair is a genuine emergency in which case they should send a contractor immediately or whether the repair is classified as a routine repair in which case you should report the repair to our office in the usual way. Please do not try and contact individual members of staff directly out of hours.

Please do try and report repairs as soon as they occur. It is usually difficult to call contractors out over the weekend and a delay in reporting repairs until a Saturday will usually delay completion of the work.

The Landlord is not responsible for the day to day running of the property and tenants will have to make their own arrangements for changing of light bulbs, bleeding radiators etc.

### **What is the most common problem reported in a student property?**

One of the most common complaints with all student properties is condensation. Condensation is caused by a combination of excessive moisture being produced (e.g. from drying clothes inside), inadequate ventilation, cold spots in rooms (e.g. in areas behind furniture) and inadequate heating. Condensation is usually caused as a result of the use of the property rather than a fault with the property itself. We would advise all students to make sure they ventilate rooms at least an hour a day by opening the window. Trickle vents on windows should be left open at all times. Most double glazed units have two locking settings – either closed completely or slightly ajar with an opening of around 10 mm. If the window is locked in the ajar setting, it will allow significant ventilation without affecting security. You can therefore keep your property ventilated and secured by setting your window accordingly when you are out e.g. at University.

### **Can I put a lock on my bedroom door?**

Whilst we understand the need for privacy, locks on doors can create a number of other issues – e.g. inhibit egress from a property in the event of fire. There are other rules that can be made to apply to a property with locks on bedroom doors that are designed to deal with bedsit type situations. TV licensing, for example, will ask for a TV licence for each room in the property. If the property does not currently have room locks, it is unlikely that locks will be provided. If you are concerned about this, you should ask before you apply for the property. Locks are unlikely to be provided once you have moved in to the property.



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### **Am I allowed to bring pets?**

Not without the permission of the Landlord. You will not be allowed to keep cats or dogs but smaller pets may be considered.

### **What happens if I can't pay my rent?**

We appreciate that sometimes finances can be tight but rental payments should be paid on time. If you fall into arrears you will be incur charges for the non payment and we will contact your guarantor for payment of the debt. Please refer to your tenancy agreement for details on charges that could be applied. The sooner you let us know of any extenuating circumstances the quicker we can try and work with you.

### **What happens if I want to leave my contract early?**

As you will be signing a fixed term contract, you are unable to give "notice" to end your contract early. Legally you will be liable to pay rent for the duration that you have signed for. In practice if your circumstances change and you want to vacate the property early, your landlord may agree to mitigate and allow you to find a replacement tenant. Any new tenant will have to complete an application form and be vetted in the usual way. Further information is available on request.

CP Walker will usually agree to assist you by showing the room on our website. In addition we would recommend that you place an advert of the property on websites such as EasyRoomMate, Gumtree or Facebook. CP Walker charge an administration fee for processing a change of tenancy – the cost will vary according to the work that CP Walker do (in terms of finding a tenant or just providing consent for a subletting to occur).

### **Waste Collection**

As a resident, you will be responsible for disposing of your waste appropriately. The arrangements for waste collection will vary property to property and we will email you when you move in to the property with details of the specific arrangements. We would ask that you take care and make sure you put your bins out and return them each week. Bins left out on streets cause more complaints from residents than any other issue and you may be liable to a fine from the local authority. For general information on bins, waste and recycling, ask to see our Factsheets for Lenton and Dunkirk or for the Beeston area.

### **Data Protection**

Your name and contact details will be shared with the suppliers of Gas, Electricity, Water, Local Council and phone and internet providers as appropriate for use in connection with your occupation of the property. We will also provide contact details to contractors so they can contact you for access in to the property to carry out any repairs etc. otherwise we would hold your data but not provide to other third parties apart from matters connected with the management of the property.

### **Do I have to take out insurance?**

Landlords will maintain an insurance policy for the buildings and the contents in the property that belong to the Landlord. Tenants are responsible for insuring their own belongings. Often the most economical way for a student to insure is by extending your parents' home policy to cover your term time address. We can provide you with an insurance quote if you need; please ask one of our members of staff if you do want a quote.

### **Access and Inspections**

CP Walker or the Landlord will carry out periodic inspections of the property during the period of the Tenancy to monitor care. From time to time, access will be required for other purposes; we would seek to give you at least 24 hours prior notice by email (except in the case of emergency).