

TRUSTEASE
RESIDENTIAL
MANAGEMENT
LTD
STUDENT GUIDE

General Information

AGENT

Trustease Residential Management Ltd has been appointed as Agents to manage the property on behalf of the landlord.

Tel: 01225 428884

E-mail: info@trusteaseproperty.co.uk

Opening hours Monday to Friday 9.15 to 5.00pm

WHAT HAPPENS IF WE ARE CLOSED

Our phones are monitored over the weekend for emergencies

An emergency is deemed to be where a problem places either you or the property in imminent danger of suffering harm, injury or damage. All other matters should be reported as soon as the office reopens.

When calling out of hours please ensure that you leave your name, address, telephone number and the nature of the emergency. (If these details are not left we will be unable to return your call.)

If you do have to call out an out of hours contractor please be aware that you will be liable for the call out charge if not an emergency.

Before placing a call for loss of power, remember to check for obvious problems such as tripped residual circuit breakers (RCB's)/ blown fuses as well as checking if other properties in the building or area are similarly affected

If you smell gas you should call the National Gas Emergency Service on 0800 111 999 and vacate the building until help arrives. Remember to ventilate the room as much as possible and not to turn on lights or electrical appliances. Do not use your mobile phone in the property.

- Always carry out a few simple checks before reporting a problem (please see section Maintenance and Information)
- Only call out of hours in an emergency or you will be responsible for the cost
- Familiarise yourself with the location of the stopcock when you first move in

RUBBISH AND RECYCLING

Please contact the Council to establish the schedule of rubbish collection in your area.

Refuse, cardboard & recyclable material (glass bottles, clean cans and paper) and garden waste (garden refuse bags can be purchased from DIY stores) should be placed on the pavement in the morning, in the recycling bins/bags provided

Please ensure that the refuse is in sealed bags placed in the wheelie bins or seagull proof bags provided

MAINTENANCE

As tenants you are responsible for the general care of the property during the period of your tenancy and should report maintenance issues promptly.

Prior to reporting your maintenance please check “Maintenance and General Information” as this may save any unnecessary call outs.

When something needs to be reported, ‘raise an issue’ on the Arthur online tenant app. Select an issue type that best describes your maintenance and fill in as much detail as applicable for us to understand the issue. From the app you will be able to track and communicate with us regarding these issues.

When a breakdown occurs, we will arrange for an approved contractor to visit your property and fix the issue. We aim to resolve your issues as quickly as we can with as little inconvenience to you as possible.

In the event of an emergency, please call the office number on 01225 428884. Please leave your name, number, property and brief description of the issue. Our phones are monitored daily and will resolve any issues that needs to be dealt with urgently.

Your Safety

Smoke Detectors

The smoke and heat detectors are provided for your protection, they must not be tampered with or covered in any way.

- Test alarms weekly using the button located on the alarm
- Never block air vents in rooms containing a gas or other carbon burning appliance
- Keep alarms free from dust and other obstructions
- Alarms are provided. Whilst replacing batteries is your responsibility, faults should be reported immediately

FIRE

In the event of fire, you must leave the building without stopping, every second counts.

The highest risk of a fire is from candles, the second is smoking otherwise, it’s the kitchen that is the most likely source of a domestic fire. As a fire precaution the use of candles and incense sticks is not allowed and all properties are non-smoking.

Do not hang clothing or flammable items on or near gas fires or night storage heaters.

Make sure you are familiar with using the fire blanket in your home. Report any problems to your landlord. Do not prop open any fire doors or tamper with door closers. Do not hang hooks on the fire doors. Ensure your escape routes are clear – hallways, stairs and doorways. If there is a fire, you would easily trip over anything in your way.

Call – 999 for the fire brigade. Do not go back into the property for any personal belongings.

Legionella

Legionella bacteria, which can live in water systems, can pose potential health problems. The infection is caused by the inhalation of water droplets or spray mists which have been contaminated by the bacteria. Those most at risk include elderly people, smoker's heavy drinkers and those suffering from long term illness. Whilst such problems are rare when a system is operating normally, you should nonetheless take reasonable precautions

- Ensure the temperature of the hot water setting on the boiler is set to at least 55 degrees (but no more than 60 degrees)
- If there is a hot water cylinder ensure the thermostat is set to at least 55 degrees (up to 60 degrees)
- Showers and taps should be flushed through following a non-period of use
- Showers and taps should be regularly cleaned and disinfected
- If there are any unused taps for example and outside garden tap or unused second toilet with hand basin, these should be run weekly throughout the tenancy
- If there is a spa pool (hot tub, whirlpool bath, spa bath etc) this MUST be disinfected AFTER EVERY USE according to the manufacturer's instructions

Keep it clean, keep it moving, keep the hot, hot and the cold cold

END OF TENANCY

Preparing to leave

The highest deductions from deposits are for cleaning costs and rubbish disposal. Please do not underestimate how costly these things can be when undertaken by a professional company at a peak time of year. It is always more than you would anticipate.

We would recommend that you check your inventory that you were provided at the start of the tenancy to ensure you are returning the property in the same condition as you found it , and do not for instance inadvertently remove any of your landlords belongings.

Points to remember are:

- Have any missing or broken items been replaced?
- Have any blown light bulbs been replaced?
- Have you reported any electrical items not in working order?
- Has the furniture been returned to its original position?
- Have ALL your possessions been removed?
- Has the property been professionally cleaned?

These are all things that you can put in hand easily and fairly cheaply prior to leaving, that can be expensive to rectify later.

Ensure prior to vacating:

- Cancel broadband provider and arrange removal of hub.
- Ensure that you have arranged for your post to be redirected. We are unable to call at properties to collect any post sent after you have vacated.
- Cancel the telephone line
- Meter readings will be collected when the final inspection is carried out.

Please remember that if you are in a joint tenancy you are all responsible for how the property is found at the check-out inspection. Therefore if some of you are leaving before others it is essential you communicate and do your fair share of cleaning, and come to an agreeable arrangement.

If you are all planning on leaving completely before the end of the contract it would be useful to undertake your final inspection at this point, which will enable us to process your deposit.

Don't forget you cannot re-enter the property once the check out has been completed

Please remember to cancel your Standing Orders in order to ensure no additional fees are raised as a result of over payment.

End of tenancy

Once you have vacated an independent inventory clerk will carry out an inspection (using the inventory you were provided at the start of the tenancy) and provide us with a check-out report and photographs. This report will note any differences which fair wear and tear aside, will form basis from which to calculate the apportionment of the deposit

Both the head tenant and Landlord are provided with a copy of this document. Working with both you and the Landlord we will do everything reasonably possible to return your deposit quickly. Once agreement has been reached we can organise for your deposit to be released.

As a general guide you will be advised within approximately ten days of the end of the tenancy, by way of a schedule of damages, whether or not your landlord proposes to make any deductions from your deposit. This figure is arrived at using the inventory and check-out report. Whilst we advise your landlord on what in our opinion is an appropriate figure, the ultimate decision as to how much is claimed rests with your landlord and not Trustease Residential Management Ltd.

All negotiations regarding Deposit deductions are negotiated with the Head tenant only. This is to help the process run smoothly and to avoid confusion.

We are unable to discuss any matters relating to the deposit return with anyone not on the Assured Shorthold Tenancy Agreement.

MAINTENANCE AND GENERAL INFORMATION

Reporting maintenance: maintenance@trusteaseproperty.co.uk

A

B

Boiler - See C for Central heating

Broadband, BT and TV

Recent years have seen significant changes with most households having a combination of mobile phones, broadband, land-line and TV packages. It is unlikely we have been informed of the last occupier's choice and what was being supplied to the property. On move-in, check mail addressed to "The Occupier" and search the house for a broadband box etc. It is likely the previous tenants will have ended their contract but it will help give an indication of what was there. Virgin packages are the most popular student's choice. If you wish to install a new satellite connection, permission must first be sought from the Landlord.

Any existing satellite dish/connection you are welcome to utilize it having been left by the supplier/a previous group of students. If it goes wrong, you will have to arrange your own repairs and contact the supplier as it will not be the responsibility of the landlord.

C

Central heating

Most radiators are thermostatically controlled with a temperature control on the pipework leading into the radiator, enabling each room to be kept at the preferred temperature. The house is more "comfortable" if the boiler is left on for longer periods at a low temperature rather than short bursts of high temperature. One radiator, usually in the hall, should always have the temperature valve open as it acts as a temperature release for the boiler (i.e. switch/turn it up or down as you like but never completely off).

If you all leave the house empty in cold weather (or if the weather might change) e.g. over Christmas, Easter, holidays etc. leave the heating on very low 24/7 to ensure there are no freezing/burst pipes – frozen pipe and subsequent leakage has been determined as Tenant's responsibility. If everyone is away at anytime for a week or more during your stay **you must** notify us.

The majority of our properties have Gas Central Heating, and will be checked annually. However, all mechanical things eventually break down. If this should happen we will arrange for a Central Heating Engineer to look at the installation, repairing it as soon as practically possible. It is impossible to predict when your boiler will breakdown, what spare part will be needed and how long it will take to get that spare part. Very frustrating for both you and us. We know a couple of good engineers who will do their best to help but, if the boiler breaks down on an evening you should expect to wait until the next working day for confirmation of an appointment. If your boiler breaks down on the weekend you will wait until Monday.

The bottom line is that we can almost certainly arrange for a Central Heating Engineer to visit the next **working** day (severe weather dependant) and in most cases have a repair in 48-72 hours. Sadly, there is nothing else that can be done but accept the situation, keep warm and wait.

If your boiler has a pressure gauge (clearly visible on the underside of the boiler or next to the boiler controls) and it drops into the red zone or to one bar for any reason, we must be informed

Central heating - Faults

When reporting a fault with your central heating we will need to know as much information as possible. On occasions simply by carrying out the following checks you can prevent an unnecessary call out and a charge. (Boiler manuals are available on line)

Is pilot light on

Has the power to the boiler been switched off in error?

Check the fuse board, the electricians may have tripped

If you have a key meter has the meter ran out of gas/ electric

Check if the boiler is flashing a failure

If only hot water is not working or only heating

Check the boiler is on the right setting

Are radiators turned up at the thermostats on the actual radiator

Cold weather.

Set central heating set to a low heat for long periods, not high heat short periods.

Council Tax

Many houses in multiple occupation have been registered with BANES council, as a student house, so Council Tax may not be demanded. Note a house of full-time students are exempt, if the house is occupied by anyone other than a full time student, they must check their liability. It could make the house liable for a council tax charge.

If you do receive any letters from the Council Tax office that isn't addressed to you, please drop it into us at Trustease it may be correspondence for the Landlord

D

Door locks

Everyone locks themselves out at sometime. Re-entry e.g. via a locksmith is very expensive in excess of £150, we would recommend trying to contact your house mates or stay a friends until someone is around to let you in .

At no point should you leave the door unlocked in the event you lose your keys, instead of getting replacements.

Drains

Clearing blockage of any drainage run whether it is the hand-basin/shower/bath/WC outlets within the house or the waste/soil drain/pipe from the house to the public sewer is the responsibility of the tenant. Any slowness/indication of a fault must be reported on arrival so that we can inspect, thereafter repairs are at your own cost. If the outflow starts to slow down or there are indications of a potential problem/blockage, please call us we can give you advise and hopefully prevent the need to call out a specialist. (Please do not use Caustic Soda as this can cause more serious problems)

As a preventative course of action we would recommend purchasing sink plug covers to reduce the amount of hair, soap, food etc entering the pipework.

Drains blocked

Try to unblock first (normally something that has been put down the drains has blocked it, food, fat, hair etc) using a domestic product (like Mr Muscle unblocker). You can purchase from any supermarket or DIY store. A traditional plunger may also help.

Damp, mould and condensation

Please read the separate information sheet provided.

E

Extractor Fans

These are provided for your benefit. Ensure they are used especially when cooking and showering, they help with preventing mould and condensation.

Electrics – Faults

If a fault should occur with the electric's below is a list of basic checks that you can carry out.

No lights on one level - check the fuse board

All sockets not working - Check the fuse board

(When a light bulb blows this can cause all electrics to trip)

Electrics keep tripping -turn off all appliances and remove from sockets, replace and turn on 1 at a time (normally it is a problem with an electric appliance not the mains electrics)

Please do not be tempted to tamper with any electrical appliance or socket. We have specialist for this. If you have carried out the checks and this has not resolved the issue, please contact us.

F **Fire**

In the event of fire, you must leave the building without stopping, every second counts.

The highest risk of a fire is from candles, the second is smoking otherwise, it's the kitchen that is the most likely source of a domestic fire. As a fire precaution the use of candles and incense sticks is not allowed and all properties are non smoking.

Make sure you are familiar with using the fire blanket in your home. Report any problems to your landlord. Do not prop open any fire doors or tamper with door closers. Ensure your escape routes are clear – hallways, stairs and doorways. If there is a fire, you would easily trip over anything in your way.

Furniture

Treat the furniture with respect, and use coasters for hot mugs to prevent blooming on old furniture and blistering/delamination on new.

G

Garden maintenance

Many of our student properties come with a gardening contract, if however this is not the case for your property please note the following handy tips.

Where front or rear gardens are laid with chippings or hard landscaped it is your responsibility to keep them weed and litter free. If, once a fortnight throughout the year you picked the weeds it would take less than 5 minutes a time .

The grass should be cut at regular intervals through the growing season.

H

Heater – Fault

Here are a couple of checks to undertake with an electric heater prior to contacting us to arrange a contractor:

Ensure the appliance is switched on at the wall

Ensure that the heater is on the right settings

Finally check the fuse board to see if the electrics have tripped

If you have carried out the checks and this has not resolved the issue, please contact us.

I

Inspections

During your tenancy we will visit the property to carry out superficial check for obvious signs of deterioration. You will be given notice of the intended visit and it is not necessary for you to be at the property.

Access – You are under a statutory and contractual obligation to allow your landlord and his representative's access subject to being given twenty- four hours' notice.

Your wishes will be accommodated wherever reasonably possible; however, failure to provide access is viewed as a serious breach of your obligations.

Instruction Manuals

If an instruction manual is missing copies are often available on line

Insurance Insure your own belongings.

We are often asked about insurance. Your belongings are your responsibility. If for example, there was a plumbing leak and your laptop is ruined then the landlord's insurance would cover the building and contents but cannot extend to your belongings wherever the fault may lie. It is therefore essential that you obtain adequate insurance according to your own requirements but first it is worth checking, where appropriate, if your parents insurance covers your belongings.

J

K

Keys - see D for door locks

Kitchen worktop

Kitchen worktops are heat resistant not burn proof. Do not put hot saucepans etc. directly onto the work surface. Do not use knives or anything sharp without a chopping board.

L

Lights

If they are not working after you have tried changing the light bulb, check the fuse board. If they are still not working, please contact us.

Light bulbs -

Light bulbs are a consumable item and therefore a tenant's liability. It worth purchasing a couple of spares as they never fail at a convenient time.

M

Mail

Receiving mail for previous occupiers is inevitable. Write "Moved, return to sender" on the envelope and put into the post box, this reduces junk mail. If there is anything that looks important or addressed to the landlord let us know for collection or bring it into our office on the Lower Bristol Road.

To reduce junk mail register at <http://mpsonline.org.uk/mpsr/>

Mattress

If you are not provided with a mattress protector, we recommend you invest in one. They are relatively cheap and keep the mattress clean. Mattresses are notorious for being easily marked yet difficult to clean.

N

Neighbours

It would be prudent to introduce yourselves to the neighbours. They are an excellent source of local information and, if necessary, assistance. Also if any issue arises during your occupancy it is more likely to be resolved in a friendly and informal manner.

Noise is always a contentious issue, if you reduce sound to a nominal talking level by 10pm, keep the front garden tidy and put your rubbish (properly bagged-up) out only on the day of collection then you are unlikely to upset the neighbour. If you are going to party be considerate invite your neighbours or drop a note through their letterbox and at least they have the choice of going out for the evening!

Remember washing machines vibrate and should not therefore be used regularly at night. Treat neighbours respectfully.

If you are disturbed by noise from your neighbours, we suggest you first speak to them and if this doesn't work don't hesitate to contact either Bath and North East Somerset Council, Environmental Health officer on tel: 01225 477000 or the police.

O

Oven - Faulty

Something as simple as the **clock not being** set or **the oven timer not on** will cause the oven to stop working. Check this first before making that call

P

Post - see M for Mail

Posters

If you wish to put posters or pictures on the wall permission from the Landlord must be sought. If permission isn't given and there is damage to the wall, this can affect your deposit.

Q

R

Rental Payments

Your rent is due monthly by Standing Order.

- This is an instruction from you to your bank to Pay Trustee. We are unable to take money from your account.
- If there is any problems with your rent payment , contact your bank to ensure they have the correct information and that there is sufficient funds available
- If there are any issues with payment please contact us immediately. Please do not bury your head in the sand hoping it will go away. We can often help.
- At the end of the tenancy it is your responsibility to cancel your standing order with the bank.

Repairs and maintenance

For all maintenance enquires we must be advised as soon as possible. In the first instance you should telephone 01225 428884 and if there is no reply then you must leave a message. We will endeavour to arrange for works to commence as soon as possible.

S

Saniflows

Please take extra care with Sani Flows. Please follow the above guide lines but please also do not use quilted toilet tissue. If these products have been used and the motor burns out it can be extremely costly and the charge will have to be met by you

Shower

The shower creates a lot of steam and with several adults there is a high risk of mould growth. Hardware/DIY stores supply cleaning products. We strongly recommend daily/after each shower cleaning also we find using a window wiper removes the excess water from the tiles. In our opinion it is essential that you manage the bathroom environment. Good heating and ventilation will minimise any problem and the spray helps a healthy living environment - obviously don't leave anything damp e.g. towels/clothes in the bathroom. Where appropriate and to state the obvious the shower curtain goes inside the bath and needs to be pulled right up to the wall tiles otherwise water will spill onto the floor.

Shower - Faulty

If you find your Shower (if it's not an electric one) has no water or no hot water, check to see if all the hot water has been used up. (leave for an hour to test if water has heated up).

If your Electric shower is not working, ensure it has not been switched off at the isolator switch/cord

Check fuse board to see if anything has tripped.

If the pressure has dropped check the shower hose hasn't split.

If the above don't solve the issue, please contact us.

Please ensure that the shower head and hose is lime scale free, this can cause low water pressure and other faults with the shower units. De-scaler can be bought from any hardware store or supermarket

Smoke alarms -

If a smoke detector keeps bleeping then the battery is low. You should ensure you regularly keep an eye on the smoke alarms to ensure the lights are still on. If they are not, contact us straightaway. At no point should you cover a smoke alarm.

T

TV Licensing

If anyone has a TV or watches live TV on any device including a laptop or phone, ensure an appropriate license has been obtained.

Theft

Any house and particularly a student house offers rich pickings for a burglar such as laptops, bicycles etc. Other than ensuring the house is locked when leaving the next best thing is to ensure it does not look like the stereotypical student home. Some of the obvious trademarks of a student house are:

- Bags of rubbish, bags of bottles, cardboard boxes etc. left in the front garden other than on collection day.
- Recycling boxes and dustbins left permanently in the front garden.
- Litter, weeds, supermarket trolley or loads of cigarette butts in front and/or rear gardens.
- Electrical appliances in the window visible from outside.
- The front of the house being out of kilter e.g. one net curtain tied in a knot.
- Window stickers e.g. support at the Uni

Anything that might suggest this is not a family home should be avoided.

Houseguests should be well known to you, they are your responsibility.

Ensure all coursework is backed up e.g. email it to yourself daily.

Ensure the house is secure, even when you are in.

U

Utilities

You are liable from start to finish of your tenancy **not** how long you live here. **You must contact your gas and electricity supplier as soon as you arrive.**

Meter readings are supplied on the inventory given to you. Supplying these figures and the start date of your tenancy, should ensure a smooth transfer.

To find out who your supplier is try: Check for mail. Gas - National Grid 0870 60801524, Electricity - probably EDF on 0870 905 0806, (gas and electricity may be found under www search TRANSCO) and Water - Wessex Water 0845 600 3600.

V

Ventilate.

It is a condition of your tenancy that the property is kept ventilated so as to avoid the build-up of condensation and mould. This is particularly important in well insulated properties. To help avoid claims against your deposit for unreasonable deterioration always use extraction fans and ventilation systems whilst regularly opening windows to allow fresh air to the property.

W

Washing Machine

The washing machine should be filled to around ½ by volume of the drum. ¾ would be too much. The clothing has to fall in on itself for washing to commence. If the washing does not separate/falls in a lump then there is too much being washed.

Beware of colour catchers they can pass into the filter and cause blockage. Do not use them unless you put them in the small nets used for delicates.

Washing machine - Fault

If your washing machine isn't draining, check filter is not blocked. If there is a fault showing on the display panel, check the manual and see what the fault means and advise us. Callout of an engineer can be expensive so it is best to check the manual first and contact us for advice.

Water

Establish the location of the external and internal water stop taps/switches. Most taps and appliances are provided with a stop valve in the pipe leading to it.

Ensure you have a screwdriver (often a coin or knife will suffice – check now) so in the event of a water leak, you can switch the water flow off immediately to limit damage.

No hot water – Fault

If water is from an Immersion tank and you have no hot water, check has all the hot water been used.

Check that the Immersion tank is switched on and also check the fuse board for a tripped switch

If hot water is from a boiler check under central heating

X

Y

Z