

THE *Student* LETTINGS MARKETPLACE HAS CHANGED DRAMATICALLY OVER RECENT YEARS.

Traditionally, the vast majority of student properties are let by the previous December. But this year up to 1,000 are still available across the city centre and South Manchester. Brexit has had an impact – the number of EU students enrolled in UK universities has dipped since the 2016 referendum. Uncertainty over the possibility of EU students paying international fees is thought to be partly to blame – along with the perception that Britain has become a less welcoming place. Tougher immigration rules have been blamed by MPs for discouraging international students from studying in the UK, with numbers declining relative to other countries. China and India are predicted to account for 60% of the global growth in overseas students within the next decade but many are choosing countries such as Canada over Britain. With new government legislation – such as selective licensing in certain areas of south Manchester and the broadening of HMO licence laws to include two-storey houses with five or more tenants – some landlords feel they are being forced out of the market and are looking to sell. Philip James Lettings have been operating in this market for more than 10 years, and currently have around 1,000 student tenants, living in everything from one-bedroom apartments to 10-bedroom houses.

We are delighted that 40% of these tenants have chosen to re-sign with us – and that we have filled 95% of our properties for September, despite the challenging rental market.



Pictured above | Neil Ryder - South Manchester Lettings Manager | Philip James Lettings

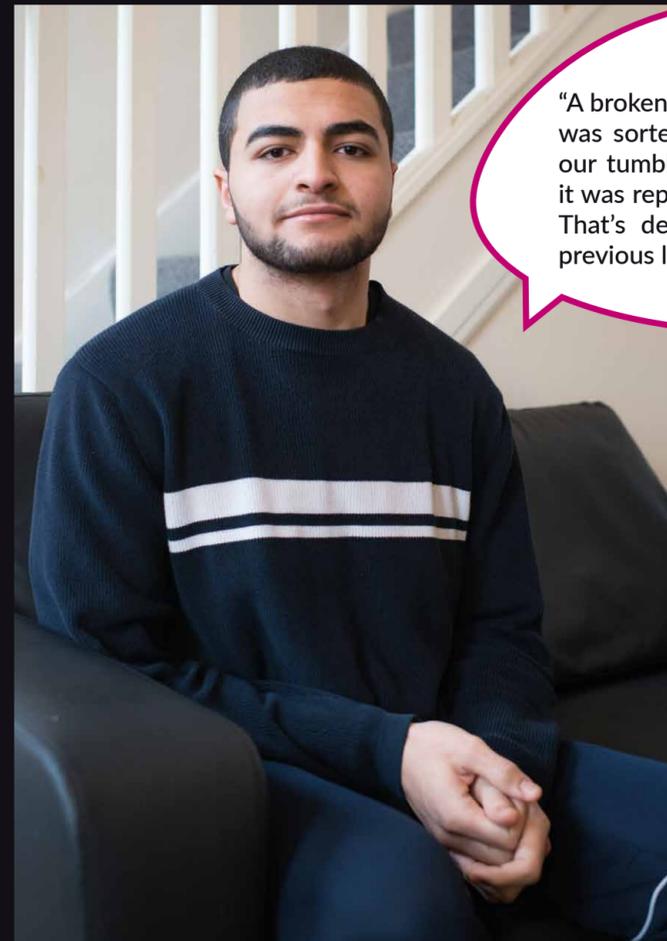
HOW HAVE WE ACHIEVED THIS?

- We understand that today's students are looking for **good quality properties**, so we only work with **professional landlords** who want to provide this. We pride ourselves on offering a high level of service to tenants and landlords and believe our results speak for themselves.
- Each property is **inspected five times a year** and **we are available 24 hours a day** to both landlords and tenants via a dedicated phone line. Our main office in West Didsbury employs 40 people, including property management and maintenance staff – enabling us to respond quickly to any issues with our student homes.
- **We go all out to market our properties.** As well as using the standard online portals such as Rightmove and Manchester Student Homes, we also target potential tenants where they spend their downtime – by placing adverts on social media platforms including Facebook and Instagram.
- **We offer late night and weekend viewings** to fit in with busy social lives – and are expanding our team to meet this demand. Our reps can collect students from our Didsbury Village office, show them properties matching their requirements and then return them to the office to sign up.
- **We also offer electronic contracts** to speed up the entire administration process – young people are, after all, used to dealing with everything online. References and contract signing can all be completed with just a few swipes on a smartphone.
- We ensure that **all contracts are signed within 14 days** of a student reserving a property.
- For larger properties of five bedrooms and above, **bills can be included** in the rental package.
- Many of our lets boast **free wifi and do not include an agency fee.**

Student HOMES



"A broken blind in one of the rooms was sorted in two days and when our tumble dryer stopped working it was replaced in less than a week. That's definitely quicker than my previous letting agent."



Pictured above | Zeyad Khalil -Third year Medical Student | Philip James Tenant

Third-year medical student Zeyad Khalil likes his current house in Fallowfield so much that he re-signed for next year – using an electronic contract.

"Philip James sent out an email asking us if we'd like to re-sign and before confirming I checked out a few other places on Rightmove," he says. "I realised this place is quite good value, because everything else seemed more expensive. My current flat mate is about to graduate so I found another medic who wanted to move in next year and I re-signed." Khalil, 21, lives in a two-bedroom end of terrace with two bathrooms. "The house is really nice and it's in decent condition," he says. "It's got two good sized bedrooms and everything is electric, which makes bills easy. There's also an alarm system and strong locks, which I appreciate because there's lots of burglaries in this area." He has found Philip James Lettings responsive when issues have arisen. Staff were easy to get hold of and problems were sorted out quickly. He says: "A broken blind in one of the rooms was sorted in two days and when our tumble dryer stopped working it was replaced in less than a week. That's definitely quicker than my previous letting agent."

Philip James Lettings manager, Neil Ryder, says:

In the 10 years we have been present in the student lettings market, we've seen quite a drastic shift. Quite rightly the standard of properties has risen to reflect the high rents students pay.

We are committed to only representing landlords who offer houses of this high standard, so that any student who signs up with us gets a property of the quality they would expect.

We also put our ongoing success in letting our student properties down to us visiting them regularly and maintaining communication with our landlords to make sure we keep them at the level required.

PHILIP JAMES
LETTINGS

Chief executive officer, Philip Nolan, adds: "I'm delighted that in a difficult marketplace Philip James Lettings has managed to let so many properties by this time of year.

This goes back to our belief that **a decent property always lets."**

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