



# Housing Guide

## Student Accommodation Services

### SAS Lettings



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# Who are we?

**Student Accommodation Services**, also known as **SAS Lettings**, is a joint venture between Residential Services and the Students' Union, set up to help students find good quality and suitable houses in the private sector to live in.



Whether you're a returning student, a postgraduate or still a first year and you're already wondering what you're going to do when you move out of halls at the end of the year, there is something for everyone.

There are 2 very important things to remember when it comes to looking for your student house:

1. Don't panic!
2. Ask for help!

There is a surplus of student housing in Swansea so you don't need to rush your housing search. However, housing can be a complicated process. Don't be afraid to ask the Students' Union Advice Centre for free, confidential advice regarding housing and accommodation.



# What is a managed property?

In a managed property, we administer your tenancy and collect your rent, as well as looking after your property whilst you're living there. All communications are with SAS, so you have the security and reassurance of **dealing directly with the University** and not private landlords. We manage many properties, varying from 1 - 10 bedroom houses in popular resident communities such as Brynmill, Uplands, Sketty and close to the City Centre in Sandfields and the Marina. With the opening of the new Bay Campus in September 2015, we have also taken on properties in the surrounding areas of Port Tennant and St Thomas.



Living in one of our managed properties, you'll have a sense of independence living in a rented house, as well as the following advantages that you wouldn't normally get when renting with a local landlord or letting agency:

- You pay termly, not monthly, via direct debit with the University.
- Your termly payment amounts are set up for you; you just complete a direct debit with your bank details.
- You don't pay a damage deposit on top of your rent; you just pay a reservation deposit to accept your room (like students in university residences) then we deduct it from your final term's rent.
- You sign an individual licence agreement so you're only responsible for your rent.
- You pay what it's worth! We price band our managed properties based on their quality.
- You don't pay agency / flat-finding fees.
- You get contents insurance included.
- Subject to meeting specific criteria and conditions, you have a cooling off period until the end of January and can cancel your contract without any financial penalty.
- You don't need to find a replacement if one of your group pulls out. If there is a change of circumstances within your group, you don't need to do anything - we'll take care of things.

# What is a tenant find property?

These properties are **managed by the landlord - not us.**

With our tenant find service, we organise house viewings, set up your tenancy/contract and take the first rent payment (usually summer retainer) for the landlord. We then pass everything over to the landlord to deal directly with you and your housemates. However, we still provide a level of service which means there are advantages that you wouldn't get when renting directly with a private landlord:



- Your landlord has signed up to our 'Tenant Find Charter' committing to specific responsibilities.
- Your utility/energy bills will be set up in your name by your landlord before you arrive.
- Your property will be professionally cleaned before you move in.
- Your landlord must respond to maintenance issues within a reasonable time.
- You'll have a 24 hour contact number from your landlord in case of emergencies.
- These properties have been inspected by the university to ensure they meet all the necessary requirements and minimum standards.



# What is a Studentpad property?

Private landlords advertise their properties on our Studentpad housing website\*. You can search for a suitable house by type, size, location or price and look at property photos. You can email details to friends and Favourite properties for comparison. There are loads of houses to choose from and new ones are added regularly.

\*SAS Lettings do not visit or inspect Studentpad properties



To register with Studentpad, landlord properties must adhere to Swansea Council's Licensing Scheme which includes:

- A property assessment for fire safety, gas and electrical safety.
- Meeting standards for the amenities, repair and maintenance.
- Landlord agrees to manage property responsibly.



## Search Available Accommodation

What type of accommodation?	<input type="text" value="Any"/>	
Living Arrangements?	<input type="text" value="Any"/>	
Which area are you looking in?	<input type="text" value="Any"/>	
How many bedrooms?	<input type="text" value="Any"/>	
What size of property?	<input type="text" value="Any"/>	
Rent Amount Per Person Weekly?	<input type="text" value="Any"/>	
Available?	<input type="text" value="Any"/>	

**139 Available**



 Search Accommodation

 Like 2k

# Private landlord / letting agency

There are many letting agencies in Swansea that target the student housing market. If you do decide to go to one of the agencies, please consider the following:



- Some agents arrange initial letting only whilst others manage the property throughout the tenancy.
- If you have decided to go to an agency they may charge fees for administration and credit reference checks.
- Fees may be expensive and non-refundable – you can't get your money back if you change your mind about the accommodation.
- Make sure any fees are clearly explained before you sign anything.
- You should only be charged fees after you apply to take a specific property.



As a rule,  
the University  
does not  
recommend  
using letting  
agents

# Property service comparison



	SAS Managed	Tenant Find	Studentpad property	Private landlord/ letting agency
All inclusive rents	✓	Not usually	Not usually	Not usually
SAS advertise properties	✓	✓	✓	✗
Properties checked to comply with legislation	✓	✓	✓	✗
SAS carry out viewings	✓	✓	✗	✗
Rents banded according to quality	✓	✗	✗	✗
SAS set up contract	✓	✓	✗	✗
Individual contract	✓	Not always	Not always	Not always
Reservation deposit comes off rent	✓	✗	✗	✗
Contents insurance included	✓	✗	✗	✗
Cooling off period until end of January	✓	✗	✗	✗
Rent collected by direct debit each term	✓	Not usually	Not usually	Not usually
Released from contract if withdraw/suspend	✓	✗	✗	✗
Opportunity to move to another room/house	Possible if vacancies	Generally not possible	Generally not possible	Generally not possible
Pastoral care/security	SAS welfare support Contact University Security 24/7	✗	✗	✗
Repairs/maintenance	SAS maintenance Formal commitment from landlords	Formal commitment from landlords	✗	✗



# Things to consider

## When to look

With a surplus of housing for students in Swansea, you don't need to rush into the process:

- SAS managed properties are advertised on Studentpad usually from November onwards.
- Tenant find properties are advertised on Studentpad from January.
- Private landlord properties are advertised on Studentpad from beginning of February.

## Rent amount

The average rents are between £65 and £75, usually excluding bills.

It's worth discussing with every member of your group about a maximum rent budget before you start looking as there would be no point viewing properties outside their means.

Bear in mind extra costs such as utility bills, internet, food etc...

**SAS managed properties do not charge a damage deposit - you pay a reservation deposit that gets deducted from your final rent.**

## Who to live with

Choosing who you want to live with can be hard.

Think about interests and lifestyle; are your potential housemates vegetarians, smokers, tidy, quiet, late night people or early risers?

Think very carefully about living with your partner – it can put a lot of pressure on you, your partner and your housemates.

## Deposit

A damage deposit is usually paid when signing a tenancy/contract. The deposit is the landlord's insurance against you causing damage to the property, missing items, unpaid rent and/or cleaning.

Key points about damage deposits:

- It is only paid back at the end of your tenancy.
- It is only paid back if all your obligations are met.
- A typical deposit is 1 month's rent.
- If you are signing an Assured Shorthold tenancy/contract, your deposit should be protected with a government authorised protection scheme within 30 days of paying the deposit.

# Location, location, location

## A few tips when choosing where to live:

- The closer you live to the Campuses, the more rent you may pay. You may get more for your money if you're willing to live a little further away.
- Don't sacrifice quality for location.
- All popular resident communities are relatively close to the Singleton Park Campus and it shouldn't take you more than 25 minutes to walk to lectures or make your way home after a night out.
- Consider how easy it is to get to the Campuses and access to public transport.
- Find out what local facilities there are such as shops, restaurants, etc.
- If you have a job, can you get to work easily.
- Check if there is parking.
- Think about whether the property offers value for money.

If you have never really ventured out of your local area in your first year, it is worth exploring local areas – some properties and local areas may not be as far away as you think.

*A guide to the most popular resident communities*



# Location, location, location

## ● **Brynmill & Uplands**

These are very popular resident communities close to Singleton Park Campus (between 5 - 20 minute walk) and local facilities, including pubs, shops and takeaways. Accommodation is mainly flats and shared houses that have at least four bedrooms.

## ● **Sandfields**

A popular area for students that is closer to the City Centre and slightly further from the Singleton Park Campus (about 15 - 25 minute walk). Accommodation tends to be slightly smaller properties – many 2 and 3 bedroom properties.

## ● **Sketty**

This is also a popular area for students close to Uplands – you can walk through the park to get to the Singleton Park Campus. Good facilities including pubs, shops, takeaways. Accommodation is mostly 4 and 5 bedroom properties.

## ● **Marina**

Accommodation in the Marina area tends to be of an exceptionally high standard, comprising purpose built luxury flats that some students are attracted to. There is a choice of 1 and 2 bedroom properties, with many 2 bedroom including en suite bathrooms. It's approximately a 25 minute walk to the Singleton Park Campus. Average rents are between £600 per month for 1 bedroom flat and £750 per month for 2 bedroom flats.

## ● **St Thomas + Port Tennant**

In 2015 the opening of the Bay Campus means that St Thomas and Port Tennant are attracting students studying in the College of Engineering and School of Management. Close to the city centre there is an abundance of local shops and amenities. Around a 15 - 20 minute walk to the Bay Campus, properties tend to be 4 - 6 bedrooms

# Viewing tips



- 1. Be sure**  
Think carefully before signing a contract as it will be difficult to get out of it if you change your mind. Make sure you're 100% clear about the terms of the contract.
- 2. Be nosy**  
Ask the landlord/letting agent all the questions you can think of about the property and the tenancy. Find out if bills are included. Ask the current tenants how they enjoyed living in the house/area and what the landlord is like regarding maintenance/repairs.
- 3. Be safe**  
Don't go to viewings alone. This is not only for your personal safety, but a second opinion is always useful. If you're part of a group, make sure everyone views the property and agrees it's suitable before signing contracts or paying deposits/fees.
- 4. Be thorough**  
Take your time; look everywhere. You'll be less likely to miss important things and be able to compare properties more objectively.
- 5. Be observant**  
Look out for the condition of the property and furniture and pay particular attention to safety features.
- 6. Be realistic**  
Don't take on more than you can afford. Set a realistic budget and stick to it. Remember to factor in utility bills, TV licence, contents insurance, food and other living costs.
- 7. Be equipped**  
Take photos to help you remember which house was which. If you're looking at several properties they can become a bit of a blur. If taking photos, check the current tenants are happy for you to do so.
- 8. Be organised**  
When you start looking, make sure you've got the means to pay your deposit as this is required by SAS and all landlords/agencies.
- 9. Be informed**  
Make sure you know your rights. If you need advice contact the Students' Union Advice Centre.
- 10. Be on the ball**  
Keep an eye out for repairs and ask if the landlord intends to get them fixed. If you decide to take the property, get it noted in writing that any agreed repairs or improvement works will be done before you move in.

# Contacts

## University Services

### **SAS Lettings/Residential Services**

01792 295101

[sas@swansea.ac.uk](mailto:sas@swansea.ac.uk)

### **Students' Union**

[www.swansea-union.co.uk](http://www.swansea-union.co.uk)

[info@swansea-union.co.uk](mailto:info@swansea-union.co.uk)

### **Students' Union Advice Centre**

01792 295821

[advice@swansea-union.co.uk](mailto:advice@swansea-union.co.uk)

### **Student Services**

01792 602000

[student.services@swansea.ac.uk](mailto:student.services@swansea.ac.uk)

### **Money@CampusLife**

01792 606699

[money.campusLife@swansea.ac.uk](mailto:money.campusLife@swansea.ac.uk)

### **Wellbeing@CampusLife**

01792 295592

[wellbeing@swansea.ac.uk](mailto:wellbeing@swansea.ac.uk)

## Emergency and safety

### **Emergency Services**

999 / 112

(101 for non-emergencies)

### **Swansea Central Police**

01792 456999



## Other useful services

### **Environmental Health**

01792 635600

[evh@swansea.gov.uk](mailto:evh@swansea.gov.uk)

### **Tenancy Deposit Protection**

<https://www.gov.uk/tenancy-deposit-protection>

### **SWALEC**

0800 980 9041

[www.swalec.co.uk](http://www.swalec.co.uk)

### **Ensleigh Insurance**

0844 472 2507

<https://www.endsleigh.co.uk/>

### **TV Licence**

[www.tvlicencing.co.uk](http://www.tvlicencing.co.uk)

### **Wales & West Utilities (Gas)**

0800 111 999

<http://www.wwutilities.co.uk/>

### **Welsh Water**

0800 052 0130

<http://www.dwrcymru.com/>