

Press Release

MALIK HALLS LTD THROWN OUT OF THE NATIONAL CODE

Malik Halls Ltd, which operates two purpose-built student complexes on the edge of both the College and the University's main campuses, has had their membership of a Government Approved Code of Standards removed. The decision, the first ever to be taken by a full meeting of the Code's Complaints Tribunal body, means that students in Bradford will be advised NOT to rent from this provider.

A meeting of the Code's complaints Tribunal was convened in order to deal with a complaint from a tenant who alleged that Malik Halls Ltd were in breach of the Code for failure to:

- Unblock shower and toilet drains within timescales required by the Code, as well as not dealing with a constant 'bleeping' noise - caused by failing smoke detector batteries - which had made it hard for tenants to sleep at night;
- Protect his deposit under an approved protection scheme and within 30 days of the money being handed over;
- Respond to written correspondence relating to repair requests within permitted timescales.

The Tribunal accepted the case made by the complainant and agreed that Malik Halls Ltd were in breach of the Code. As such, it determined that they be removed from membership AND that they be prevented from making any re-application to join for 12 months. Full details of the Tribunal's decision can be found here

The Chair of the Complaints Tribunal, John Martin, said "Given the evidence presented to it, the Tribunal had little option other than to make the decision it has. The Tribunal would like to thank the student who pursued this complaint for bringing the failures of this provider to its attention and would encourage others who find themselves in a similar situation to have the courage to do likewise"

Andy Fitzpatrick, General Manager of the University of Bradford Students' Union, who were represented on the Tribunal, said "Because of the current over-supply of student accommodation in Bradford, especially purpose-built halls, it is vital that both existing and potential students know which of the providers they can trust to deliver a quality, well managed product. In our view it is only those providers who are members of this Code can do so and we will therefore ONLY advise our students to rent from them"

Councillor Val Slater, Bradford Council's Executive Member for housing, said "Bradford Council recognises the value, both culturally and economically, that students bring to the city and believes that the accommodation available to them should not only meet all of the necessary health and safety requirements, but should also be professionally managed. The Council will continue to work with its partners at Unipol, the University and College and its landlords to ensure these standards are achieved."

Notes for Editors

1) The National Code being referred to is operated by the Accreditation Network UK (an umbrella body that promotes voluntary schemes designed for landlords of private sector rented accommodation) and Unipol (a not-for profit student housing charity what operates in Leeds, Bradford and Nottingham). The Code is 'Approved' under Section 233 of the 2004 Housing Act.

2) Full details of the requirements of this Code are available from www.nationalcode.org/

3) The Code operates an independent complaints procedure, giving tenants (and former tenants in some cases) of purpose-built accommodation that is registered under the Code the ability to lodge a complaint if they believe the operators of that accommodation are not meeting with given standards.

4) The complaints procedures consist of different stages that matters can be escalated to - starting with the provider's own internal process and finishing with a meeting of the Full Tribunal. The latter consists of representatives of providers themselves, representatives from the National Union of

Students and also allows for the involvement of the local university/students' union and housing authority from the location where the complaint first originates from. Although the procedures have been in operation since 2005, this was the very first time that a complaint was deemed so serious that it required a meeting of the Full complaints Tribunal. The Tribunal is independent of ANUK/Unipol.