

**Action Group – Housing
Meeting Date: 18.01.24****Present**

Dean Turner, Welfare and Community Officer **(DT) (Allocated Officer)**

Scott Dawson, Student Voice and Representation Manager **(SD) (Note Taker)**

Trinity Barson, LGBTQ+ Officer & Welfare and Liberation Committee Member **(TB)**

Fern Warwick, Welfare and Liberation Committee Member **(FW)**

Idea for Discussion:**Current Policy**

The Guild believes that students should live in good quality, affordable and safe accommodation and shouldn't be extorted by landlords or letting agencies.

The Guild is committed to providing advice and guidance to students about accommodation processes and issues, and will work with all relevant stakeholders, where required, to ensure that this is the case.

The Guild notes that the current state of housing Bournbrook is unsustainable, with a large number of student houses having 5/6 bedrooms or more and Landlords continuing to develop denser housing, raising concerns about student welfare and infrastructure.

Simultaneously limits imposed by the Council through Article 4 provisions cause market pressures on student housing, reducing supply and artificially raising prices. The Guild commits to work with and lobby local councillors, the city council and landlords to develop housing sustainably for the continued existence of a local, thriving community.

Minutes from meeting 18.01.24:

DT: Still a relevant policy, particularly given the cost of living crisis and the pressures facing students due to this.

TB: Agreed with this summary from DT.

DT: Felt that some of the wider wording could be amended, but nothing needs adding. For example, the policy currently states some student houses have 5 or 6 rooms but in many cases it can be higher.

DT: Also discussed that some of the previous content regarding Article 4 provisions may not be fully applicable as they have been in the past.

TB: Searched Article 4 and noted that this opens discussions around houses of multiple occupancy (HMOs) which may make the policy more complicated than it is currently.

SD: Noted that we would have to conduct further research into Article 4 impact, it may be that we can revisit that for the policy if students request amendments.

TB: Also noted that students live in areas beyond Bournbrook (Selly Oak, etc...) and therefore an amendment should be made here.

DT: Suggested the point could be revised to apply to all student housing nationally and not just one area of Birmingham.

There was agreement on the above.

Amended Policy:

The Guild believes that students should live in good quality, affordable and safe accommodation and shouldn't be extorted by landlords or letting agencies.

The Guild is committed to providing advice and guidance to students about accommodation processes and issues, and will work with all relevant stakeholders, where required, to ensure that this is the case. The Guild notes that the current state of student housing is unsustainable, with Landlords continuing to develop denser housing, raising concerns about student welfare and infrastructure.

The Guild commits to work with and lobby local councillors, the city council and landlords to develop housing sustainably for the continued existence of a local, thriving community.

Agreed Actions:

- There was agreement that the policy was still relevant to students.
- There was agreement that as the policy is in the benefit of all students and there have been no substantial changes, it does not require an All Student Vote to progress.
- It was agreed by consensus (with approval from DT as Chair) that this policy can automatically be re-enacted.

The Amended Policy will therefore be automatically re-introduced to the Guild Live Policy and Idea documentation. Reapproval (pending request for amendments) is scheduled for January 2027.

Any questions regarding approval, next steps or requests for further information can be submitted to: studentvoice@guild.bham.ac.uk