



Appendix 6

Questions for Southampton University Students' Union

- 1. What is the Southampton University Students' Union view on housing pressures in the city in general and the availability of accommodation for students?**

The University of Southampton Students' Union (SUSU) has always felt that the main problem with accommodation for students is not the availability but the quality. Students are often unaware of the additional requirements for HMOs and landlords are often reluctant to adhere to these standards voluntarily. An additional pressure specific to students is landlords and agencies trying to persuade students to sign housing contracts as early as November to start only in July of the following year; SUSU is currently working with local agencies to attempt to address this, however.

- 2. What impact do you feel the new student accommodation currently in development will have on housing pressures in the city?**

We understand that the 2 new University of Southampton halls of residence currently under construction and planned to open in October 2014 will provide an additional 1600 beds. The impact this has on housing pressures, however, will depend on the number of new students coming to the University in 2014 so is impossible to predict.

New halls of residence will have no impact on the ability of students to enforce the required standards in existing HMOs.

- 3. What impact, if any, has the HMO SPD had on Southampton?**

No data has been provided by the Council on which to comment.

- 4. Do you have any views on the subsequent introduction of the HMO licensing scheme? For more information visit link >**
(<http://www.southampton.gov.uk/living/housing/private/landlord/hmos/mandatory.aspx>)

We feel it is too early to assess the impact; we are only now starting to receive enquiries from students who have been informed their landlord does not hold an

HMO licence and are worried about the implications. We do, however, consider that the scheme should be better publicised so students are made aware that they should check whether their landlord holds a licence before they sign a housing contract.

5. Do you have any recommendations you would like to submit to the Panel related to the terms of reference?

We would reiterate the comments made in our original submission: in our view the enforcement and improvement of standards in HMOs should be the priorities for the Council.

We would welcome improved partnership working to tackle unscrupulous landlords and lettings agencies. The 40,000+ students in Southampton make a large cultural and financial contribution to the city and we wish to see more effective mechanisms for enforcing their rights as tenants.

Any evidence you have to support your responses would be gratefully received.

**David Gilani, Union President 2013-14
20th December 2013**