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Student accommodation scheme growing in popularity

Tuesday 19th February 2013

Since its launch one year ago, over 1,200 student properties have been signed up to a new accreditation scheme.

The 1,221 properties across 26 UK cities are now listed in the AFS/Unipol Code, the first nationwide scheme to accredit student landlords who offer high standards of accommodation.

Accreditation figures are predicted to rise to 2,500 by the end of this year.

The Code was created by the Accommodation for Students (AFS) website and Unipol, the charity working to improve training, standards and professionalism in student housing.

It is a voluntary scheme where landlords commit to maintaining professional standards when managing shared student properties. It sets out a number of specific standards which rented student properties and their management must adhere to, covering key areas such as comfort, facilities, safety, security and service.

So far the code has had greatest take-up in Leeds, Nottingham, Manchester, Durham and Birmingham.

A recent survey conducted by AFS suggested that the introduction of the accreditation scheme has been well received throughout the industry with over 90% of students saying they would prefer to rent a property that has been physically inspected and accredited.

As part of the accreditation process, standards are physically checked. Dick Scott, one of the property verifiers, said: "Perhaps the two most important things about the verification process are that someone completely independent checks the property, and that it does really get checked – unlike many other accreditation schemes."

One unique feature about the verification process is that student tenants are also interviewed.

The University of Exeter was the first university to officially adopt it and now actively promotes it to all student landlords in the city.

Rob Hunter, founder of Place Group UK and the London Student Group, was one of the first landlords in London to sign up for the code.

He said: "Put simply, the code is definitely working for us and I can't speak highly enough of the accreditation, the outstanding quality of the assessors and the results we have seen."

"Compliance with a recognised published standard provides peace of mind to parents and students, and I am passionate about encouraging more landlords to get behind the scheme and help improve standards throughout the sector."

Simon Thompson, co-founder and director of AFS, commented: "Although it is still early days, with only pockets of accredited inventory in each city, we are very pleased with both the take-up from landlords and reaction from students."

A video which shows how the scheme works can be viewed on YouTube at:

<http://tinyurl.com/axmrf2>

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The Landlord & Letting Show - The Barbican, London - 13th & 14th March 2013

Supported by British Gas, Directline and Angels Media, the first Landlord & Letting Show of 2013 comes to the Barbican, London, on Wednesday 13th and Thursday 14th March 2013. Whatever your involvement in the private rented sector, this show promises to deliver everything you need to succeed!

[Click here for more information](#)

The East Midlands Conference Centre - Nottingham on March 19th 2013



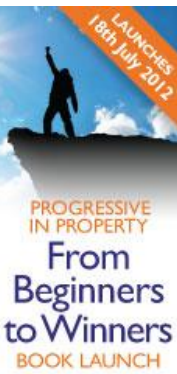
EMPO is hosting the East Midlands Landlord Expo a FREE visitor event at the East Midlands Conference Centre, Nottingham on March 19th 2013. The aim of the one day Expo is to enhance the awareness and importance of improving landlord management and housing standards in the private rented sector.

[Click here for more information](#)

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