

For many people, this represents the first time that they are moving away from home and having true independence. Choosing the right accommodation is key and this guide should give you a little bit more information on what to look for and where. If you have any questions then feel free to give us a call.

There are plenty of options when moving into private accommodation and a variety of options available in the local area.

The weekly cost of rent varies from around £55 to £120; often this price excludes the utilities (electricity/gas, heating and water). The capacity of the houses also varies, from single bedroom flats to 9 or more bedroom houses. You should carefully consider what type of accommodation you are interested in before making any decisions. If you want to live with your friends, you should discuss location, size of your group and budget before you begin your search.

A good idea before you start looking for a house is to make a list of all the things that are important to you. This may include en suite bathrooms, a garden or closeness to MAMT, for example.



What is MLAS?

MLAS is the Midland Landlord Accreditation Scheme which recognises professional landlords. Landlords are required to attend a one day seminar to learn about best practice for landlords, housing legislation, and what is expected of them. They will be required to sign up to the MLAS Code of Conduct. For further information please refer to the website at www.mlas.org.uk

All members are required to undertake continual professional development, which allows them to keep up-to-date with the latest legislation, advice and guidance on renting and letting property.

MLAS have a lot of useful links and a list of accredited landlords on their website, so do have a look.

Local Area

Before you start looking for a property, take the time to check out the local area and be sure on where you want to live before you start the search. There are three main areas surrounding MAMT: **Ladywood, Jewellery Quarter** and the **city centre**. However, there are lots of other options in the city which you may consider, including **Selly Oak, Moseley, Kings Heath, Weoley Castle, Harborne** and **Quinton**. If you don't mind travelling on the bus or train then there are areas such as **Rowley Regis, Dudley, Sutton Coldfield** and **Walsall**, all within 30 minutes of Birmingham by public transport. As we are so central, the possibilities are endless so use the Google Maps public transport function to see how long your journey to MAMT would be.

There are now many options of accommodation within the local area from private landlords offering shared house accommodation to private providers with purpose built student accommodation. Check out all the options and make sure you are completely happy before signing any contract - once you have signed, in most cases a contract is binding.

Accommodation Checklist – use this when you visit properties to have a thorough look around.

Exterior

- Does the roof look sound? Any broken tiles, holes etc?
- Check the gutters and pipes for cracks, moss and grass
- Ensure the window frames are not rotten and that the windows themselves are not cracked.

Interior

- Check for signs of damp. These will look like dark patches, peeling wallpaper and flaking paint
- Look out for signs of condensation, such as mould on the walls.
- Check for signs of pests, such as slug trails and mouse droppings

Gas & Electricity

- Do the plugs get hot when switched on? How many sockets are there
- Are there any frayed cables?
- If there is a gas fire, does it heat up correctly?
- Check that there is an Annual Gas Safety Certificate and that it is valid
- Check electrical appliances are in good working order.

Plumbing

- Make sure the hot water and all the taps work.
- Check any baths/wash basins for cracks and ensure the toilet flushes properly.

Security

- Ensure front doors are solid with five-bar mortice lock (some insurance companies will insist on this, if wooden do they have a secondary lock?)
- Check that all internal doors and windows have locks.
- Does the house have burglar and smoke alarms?
- Check access to the rear of the property is secure, adequate fencing, gated entry etc.
- Ask your landlord to make any security improvements you feel are required.
- If the house has 5 or more tenants and is over 3 or more storeys then the property requires a HMO Licence (House in Multiple Occupation) which you should ask the landlord to provide.

It is also a good idea to ask the current tenants about their experience of living in the house and would they recommend. Recommendations are always a good indication.

If you would like any further advice then please do contact us

www.mamt.org.uk