

1982 A Housing Policy that delivers for UEA Students passed 3 November 16

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Union Notes:

1. In 2015 Norwich City Council began exploring an Article 4 Direction as part of its town planning work which would limit the development of new Homes of Multiple Occupancy (HMOs) in key student areas of the city.
2. Following lobbying over the summer, in September 2016 UEASU successfully put back the decision on the introduction of Article 4 to early 2017.
3. 2016 saw a record intake of first year undergraduate students to UEA with there not being enough on campus accommodation for all of them to live in despite the development of the Blackdale accommodation blocks.
4. In the UEA strategic plan there is a clear statement of intent to increase the number of first year students further.
5. That on campus, non-sharing accommodation costs in 2016/17 range from £84.49 to £138.46 per week with there only being two accommodation blocks at the cheapest cost.
6. Norwich University of the Arts plans to expand its student numbers in the same time period as UEA.
7. Unlike other major University cities Norwich has few large scale, 3rd party accommodation developments.
8. For the past few years the University has budgeting to increase rental incomes by more than inflation.
9. Since the standard 3.4% accelerator on rental income was introduced in 2008, inflation (CPI) has run at just 2.6% on average- which means that a student on a £5000 annual license now pays out an extra £500 in real terms for what is ageing accommodation.
10. The UEA Vice Chancellor has signalled in meetings with the Full Time Officers willingness to listen to and act upon arguments about availability of and affordability of accommodation both on and off campus at UEA.

Union Believes:

1. Students should have access to quality, affordable housing whilst studying at UEA and that current levels of on-campus rent are not accessible for a huge number of students.
2. In coming months Norwich is likely to see a further shift away from there being a larger supply of student housing than there is demand.
3. That UEA has a responsibility to its students and should be providing adequate student accommodation on campus whilst also being central to city wide discussions on the future of HMOs and other accommodation types in Norwich.
4. That the Article 4 Direction being explored by Norwich City Council would be damaging to the HMO market in Norwich and will have a negative effect on rent, quality and availability of housing for students.
5. UEASU has, through HomeRun, its accreditation scheme, and HomeLet, its letting agency, a good level of influence over the private sector housing market in Norwich.
6. The University should remove its automatic 3.4% rent accelerator and develop an affordable student housing policy that takes into account and intervenes to deliver both on and off campus supply of accommodation for students.
7. That the tactics for such a campaign goal should be varied and be subject to detailed analysis on a regular basis by the Student Officer Committee.

Resolves:

To mandate the SU Officers to:

1. Campaign to secure quality on and off campus accommodation to students at a responsible price.

2. Ensure the University involves students as an active part of the rent setting process each year.
3. Launch a regular community engagement group with SU Officers, local residents and University staff.
4. Set up and administer a Good Neighbour Scheme, auto enrolling all HomeLet houses and allowing others to join.
5. Develop Project 2020 which will see the raising of the HomeRun minimum housing standards over the next 3-4 years.
6. Have progress on these goals as a regular discussion item at key SU meetings and to deploy a range of campaigning tactics which are appropriate for the situation.