

Press release: Savvy students know their renting rights

- University students can demand better in the private rented sector
- Deposits must be protected in a government-backed scheme
- Landlords must put problems right quickly – or students can complain

When things go wrong with rented properties, students have the right to get them fixed – and the government has published [How To Rent guides](#) to help out.

Government legislation protects students and their money from rogue landlords and agents. And new laws coming into force on 1 October, around the time when a new term starts, will mean landlords must provide adequate size bedrooms and sufficient rubbish bins.

Six things students should know on move-in day:

1. Your deposit must be protected in a government-backed scheme – get a certificate from your landlord or agent.
2. Check the property is safe – think fire, electrical, gas safety certificate, and hygiene. If you have concerns, raise them with your landlord or agent immediately.
3. Agree an inventory with your landlord or agent – or you could lose money when you move out.
4. By law, landlords must install a smoke alarm on each floor (and carbon monoxide alarms if needed) but it's your job to regularly check they are working.
5. Know who is responsible for bills (water, electricity, gas) and take meter readings.
6. Landlords or agents must be reachable to fix problems quickly – make sure you have their contact details.

Minister for Housing and Homelessness Heather Wheeler MP said:

Rogue landlords and agents should never get in the way of students enjoying university life and we're working to stop them in their tracks.

We've brought in laws to crack down on bad operators and we have measures in place to protect tenants' deposits.

We are going even further by changing the law to ban unfair letting fees and cap tenancy deposits.

We want students to know their rights – that landlords must do their job and fix leaks, keep heating working and install smoke alarms.

Landlords or agents must deal with any problems with the water, electricity and gas supply, and maintain appliances and furniture they have supplied. Councils can step in when landlords don't do their job, and there are independent schemes to help resolve disputes with letting agents.

Houses lived in by 5 or more independent people will soon have to be licensed in an extension of laws which previously only covered buildings of 3 storeys or more.

Homes of any number of storeys will be covered under the extension, meaning more students will be helped – with tiny bedrooms (of less than 6.51 square metres for one adult) banned and landlords forced to provide the right bins to homes.

The laws will come in from 1st October but local authorities can give landlords up to 18 months to get bedroom sizes right.

As well as this, new regulations taking effect from 1st April 2019 will keep renters' money safe by only allowing letting agents that join a government-approved client money protection scheme to handle their money.

Students should use the [How to rent](#) and [How to rent a safe home](#) checklists on Gov.uk.

News story: Surrey satellite firm set for lift off from India

NovaSAR-1, designed and built by Surrey Satellite Technology Ltd (SSTL) in Guildford, will be able to see through clouds and image the world night and day.

The new spacecraft from SSTL will offer low cost remote imaging to global customers including the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO) in Australia and the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO).

SSTL is a great British success story, which already has 40% of the world's small satellite export market.

Science Minister Sam Gyimah said:

The data from this satellite, backed by a £21 million investment from the Government, will help innovative start-ups develop new apps that could revolutionise the way we live.

It's a great example of how we are working with the space sector

through our modern Industrial Strategy, ensuring we remain at the forefront of pioneering science and exploration.

The UK is a world leader in Earth Observation technologies which have an increasing number of down to Earth applications, including through the UK Space Agency's International Partnership Programme (IPP). This programme harnesses the expertise of the British space sector to tackle problems all around the world, from predicting dengue fever outbreaks in Vietnam to improving healthcare in Nigeria through satellite connectivity.

There is also a significant commercial opportunity, with Earth Observation satellite services estimated to support industries representing a total turnover of more than £235 billion.

Since 1981, SSTL has built and launched more than 50 satellites for 20 international customers including in Europe, USA and Canada – as well as providing training and development programmes, consultancy services, and mission studies for ESA, NASA, international governments and commercial customers.

International Trade Secretary Liam Fox recently launched the Department for International Trade's first space exports campaigns to target opportunities initially in the US and India.

The 'Space Exports' campaign will see 2 of the world's fastest growing markets targeted with trade missions. In India the Department for International Trade (DIT) will also increase its operation by recruiting British space sector experts to work in market.

Minister of State for the Department for International Trade, Baroness Fairhead, said:

SSTL is a fantastic example of how UK innovation and engineering can have a global impact. It is clear that our space industry is thriving, resulting in significant growth which reinforces the UK's reputation as a leader in the sector.

Overseas sales are vital to sustaining this growth, and our recently launched Export Strategy outlines the support available to companies to help them fulfil their exporting potential. I would encourage companies that are looking to follow in SSTL's footsteps to make use of financial support from UK Export Finance and the extensive export opportunities that are listed on GREAT.gov.uk.

The UK Space Agency has invested £21 million in the development of NovaSAR-1 and will benefit from access to data from the spacecraft, significantly boosting the UK's sovereign Earth observation capabilities and leveraging additional inward investment to the UK by creating highly skilled jobs in the UK space industry.

Dr Graham Turnock, Chief Executive of the UK Space Agency, said:

This exciting new satellite, with its powerful imaging radar system and compact design, has been developed and built in the UK, and will provide a host of benefits for applications including the detection of oil spills, flood monitoring and agriculture.

The Government wants the UK to thrive in the commercial space age as part of the modern Industrial Strategy. This mission demonstrates SSTL's world leading skills and the exciting potential for further growth in our sector.

The satellite is due to launch from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre in Sriharikota, India at 17:37 (BST).

NovaSAR-1 was designed and manufactured by SSTL, with an S-Band SAR payload developed by Airbus Defence and Space in Portsmouth and an Automatic Identification Receiver supplied by Honeywell Aerospace.

Press release: £6 million awarded to successful coastal projects in first wave of funding

- Government announces 16 'fast track' coastal projects ready to start this year
- Over £6 million is being invested to create 1100 jobs
- Coastal Communities Minister promises 'new deal' for Great British Coast

Sixteen successful 'Fast Track' projects are receiving a share of £6 million Coastal Communities Fund money to help deliver sustainable growth and jobs across the Great British Coast.

As part of the fifth round of the [Coastal Communities Fund](#), 16 'ready to go' projects have been selected to start work to transform their coastal communities in 2018 to 2019 before the main round funding becomes available in April 2019.

The chosen projects, which range from a community arts project in South Shields to heritage boat tours in Falmouth's historic docks, are collectively forecast to create over 1100 jobs and are set to attract public and private sector co-funding of £2.4 million.

On a visit to one of the 'fast track' winners, Disability First "Access Fylde

Coast”, Coastal Communities Minister, Jake Berry MP, said:

It’s really exciting to see money from the Coastal Communities Fund help kick start these shovel ready projects, which have the potential to unlock the barriers to development and growth in our coastal communities.

Investment in our seaside areas, through projects such as these, will provide nothing short of a New Deal for the Great British coast, creating thousands of jobs, training places and opportunities along the shore.

Disability First, “Access Fylde Coast” will receive almost £1 million to boost tourism by improving the visitor experience for people with disabilities visiting the Fylde, Blackpool and Wyre coasts. The project includes training courses for local businesses to support people with disabilities, organising new events and creating trained volunteer access guides. Other game-changing projects set to benefit from grants include:

- an almost £500,000 grant to support the local creative economy in Margate High Street with a state-of-the-art Fabrication Laboratory providing technical skills training, business planning and support for local creative businesses and professionals
- a £900,000 grant to the Scarborough Construction Skills Village project to help tackle local unemployment and skills challenges. Funding will support local residents into new apprenticeships and jobs in the construction industry, particularly in micro and small construction companies
- a £60,000 grant towards a project to refurbish an industrial landmark building – St Hilda’s Pit Head in South Shields – transforming it into a community, cultural and heritage hub providing training, office, event and exhibition space

The Coastal Communities Fund was established to support coastal projects in the UK deliver sustainable growth and jobs.

Since 2012, the Fund has awarded grants to 295 projects across the UK, totalling over £173 million. This has helped to start almost 500 new businesses and create more than 7,000 jobs – with these figures set to more than double once the projects that are already underway are completed.

Applications submitted for Round 5 of the Coast Communities Fund are currently being assessed. The successful main round bids of the remaining £34 million are expected to be announced by early 2019.

The full list of fast track grant awards are:

A £53,000 grant towards a £70,000 project to employ a village commercial manager to develop and organise events and to provide facilities to attract more long-stay visitors and extend the visitor season. Project includes implementing a 3-year promotion, marketing and development plan for the

village.

Berwick Coastal Community Team, Northumberland

£304,000 grant towards the £324,000 Berwick “Welcome Visitor” project to improve the town’s visitor offer by promoting new visitor opportunities, events and products that will encourage longer stays and extend the current visitor season.

British Marine Federation South West, South Hams, Plymouth

£53,000 grant towards a £177,850 project to diversify coastal and maritime tourism in Devon. Funding will support the development and promotion of a package of measures to increase cross Channel leisure yacht visits between Brittany and Devon, both during and outside the peak season.

£61,390 grant towards a £76,425 project to refurbish an industrial landmark building – St Hilda’s Pit Head in South Shields – and transform it into a community, cultural and heritage hub providing training, office, event and exhibition space and a base for a community arts project.

Coastal West Sussex Partnership

£170,000 grant towards a £340,000 project to position coastal West Sussex as an active hub for water-based sports. Funding will promote collaboration and an experience based marketing campaign for local businesses, including a water sports development office.

Deal Town Council – Cycle Friendly Deal, Kent

£98,077 grant towards a £106,000 project to create a new tourism offer aimed at families and occasional cyclists to make Deal a cycle friendly town. Funding will support the development of family friendly cycle routes, improved signage and the creation of new cycle maps and guides, plus a new e-bike share scheme.

Disability First, “Access Fylde Coast”, Lancashire

£985,522 grant to improve the tourism offer and visitor experience for people with disabilities visiting the Fylde, Blackpool and Wyre coasts. Project includes training courses for local businesses to support people with disabilities, organising new events and the creation of trained volunteer access guides.

Jurassic Coast Volunteer Network, Devon

£258,526 grant to create a joined-up network of volunteers and businesses along the Jurassic Coast, in partnership with local education providers. It will include an IT platform with training, accreditation, recruitment and business relationships managed by the Jurassic Coast Trust.

Kneehigh Theatre Trust Ltd, St Austell, Cornwall

£803,236 grant towards a £1.295 million project to develop a centre of excellence to provide training and development for a new generation of leaders and workers in the cultural and tourism sectors. It will also support 2 festivals of contemporary culture and the use of new technology to create new coastal digital experiences to attract visitors throughout the year.

Lancashire Wildlife Trust

£71,000 grant towards a £985,000 project to increase nature tourism by working with local businesses to enhance engagement in the nature tourism offer of the Lancashire coast. Events, talks, surveys and workshops will be organised to encourage local communities to champion the coast.

National Maritime Museum Cornwall Trust, Falmouth, Cornwall

£110,000 grant towards a £223,200 project to introduce heritage boat tours of Falmouth's historic docks, with trained tour guides, to highlight maritime history and wildlife. Funding will increase visitor numbers, create jobs and volunteering opportunities and support local maritime businesses.

Medina Valley, Isle of Wight

£60,000 grant towards a £119,900 project to support the creation of an Isle of Wight Events Centre. The aim is to enhance the estuary's tourism offer with local hospitality providers and businesses and encourage more collaborative working and marketing.

Scarborough Construction Skills Village

£896,568 grant to the Scarborough Construction Skills Village project to help tackle local unemployment and skills challenges. Funding will support local residents into new apprenticeships and jobs in the construction industry, particularly in micro and small construction companies.

St Austell Coastal Community Team – A green and Ceramic Cultural Centre, Cornwall

A £1,093,520 contribution towards a £1.29 million project to transform the St Austell area as a visitor destination. Funding will support a programme of public realm, cultural initiatives and events and skills training to attract more visitors and extend the tourist season.

Suffolk County Council, 'The Hold' Suffolk Heritage Activity and Events Programme, Ipswich

A £414,763 grant towards a £1.44 million project to bring to life 'The Hold' – a new Suffolk Archives and Heritage Centre next to the Ipswich Waterfront. Funding will deliver a comprehensive, year round heritage activity and events programme to develop new audiences to visit Ipswich Waterfront.

The Margate School, Enterprise and Technical Support for the Creative Economy, Margate

£499,100 grant to support the local creative economy in Margate's High Street and town centre by kick-starting Margate's first Fabrication Laboratory. This will provide technical skills training, business planning and design mentoring/ facilitation for local creative businesses and professionals.

Press release: Justice Secretary confirms plans to reduce conflict in divorce

- government acts to reduce family conflict in the divorce process
- new process to remove need for couples to have been separated or to allege 'fault' in order to obtain divorce
- spouses would no longer be able to contest the divorce application

The government is taking action to end the 'blame game' for separating couples, with new proposals to help families instead focus on key practical decisions and look to the future.

At present, divorcing couples are forced to blame each other for the marriage breakdown on the grounds of 'unreasonable behaviour', adultery or desertion, or prove they have been separated for a minimum of 2 years – even if the separation is mutual. If the divorce is contested, and a spouse cannot prove 'fault', then couples currently have to wait 5 years before a divorce is granted.

Ministers want to reduce the antagonism of citing fault and the anxiety it creates, at an already trying time for couples and their children.

Therefore, a new notification process will allow people to notify the court of the intent to divorce, whilst removing the opportunity for the other spouse to contest it.

Justice Secretary David Gauke said:

Marriage will always be one of our most important institutions, but when a relationship ends it cannot be right for the law to create or increase conflict between divorcing couples.

That is why we will remove the archaic requirements to allege fault or show evidence of separation, making the process less acrimonious and helping families look to the future.

The proposals are set out in a government consultation launched today (15 September 2018), and will apply to marriages and civil partnerships.

Proposals detailed in the consultation include:

- retaining the sole ground for divorce: the irretrievable breakdown of a marriage
- removing the need to show evidence of the other spouse's conduct, or a period of living apart
- introducing a new notification process where one, or possibly both parties, can notify the court of the intention to divorce
- removing the opportunity for the other spouse to contest the divorce application

The consultation also seeks views on the minimum timeframe for the process between the interim decree of divorce (decree nisi) and final decree of divorce (decree absolute). This will allow couples time to reflect on the decision to divorce and to reach agreement on arrangements for the future where divorce is inevitable.

Today's announcement delivers on the Justice Secretary's commitment to reform these aspects of divorce law, and bring the UK in line with other countries who already have similar procedures.

Notes to editors

- Current divorce law requires people seeking divorce to give evidence of one or more of five facts; three are based on 'fault' and two are based instead on a period of separation. The five facts are: adultery, behaviour, desertion, 2 years' separation (if the other spouse consents to the divorce) and 5 years' separation (otherwise). (These are summary versions of the facts).
- The behaviour fact, which was an issue in the case of *Owens v Owens*, is sometimes called "unreasonable behaviour" but is actually "that the respondent has behaved in such a way that the petitioner cannot reasonably be expected to live with the respondent".
- At present, where both parties agree, the court can dissolve the marriage after the couple have lived apart for a minimum 2 years. Where one spouse disagrees, the other spouse will either have to wait to be separated for 5 years before a divorce is granted or may instead obtain a divorce if they demonstrate to the satisfaction of the court that their spouse has committed adultery or that they have behaved in such a way that the party cannot reasonably be expected to live with them. Desertion is rarely relied upon. The legal definitions of the facts can be found in [section 1\(2\) of the Matrimonial Causes Act 1973](#).
- Only about 2% of respondents contest the petitioner's decision to seek a divorce. Of these 2% of respondents, only a handful go on to contest ("defend") the divorce at a court hearing. This means that, under the current law, a spouse who wishes to divorce can already be certain of doing so in practice, regardless of the other spouse's wishes, provided that the petition establishes irretrievable breakdown.
- For victims of domestic abuse, these proposals will mean that the legal

process cannot be used for coercive control.

- Government recognises that there may be exceptional circumstances in which it may be desirable to retain the ability for a spouse to defend the divorce, for example if one party lacks mental capacity to make an informed decision to seek a divorce.
- Data shows that out of every 5 divorce petitions over the last 5 years, roughly 3 rely on conduct facts and 2 on separation facts. In 2017, the behaviour fact accounted for nearly half of all petitions (46.8%, or 47.3% when combined with the adultery fact).
- Last year almost 110,000 people petitioned for divorce in England and Wales.
- At present, 6 weeks and a day must elapse before a decree nisi can be made absolute. In practice divorces take much longer to go through for a number of reasons including dealing with the other party and with legal representatives and the desirability of agreeing financial arrangements before the final divorce.
- This consultation focuses on the legal requirements for ending a marriage or civil partnership – it does not cover other aspects of matrimonial law such as financial provision. The court cannot make divorce financial orders until there is a divorce petition. The court cannot therefore make financial orders – such as pension sharing or orders for sale of property – if a spouse has walked out of the marriage but not sought a divorce. In practice, with regard to financial orders, no spouse would be ‘worse off’ under a “no-fault” divorce than one established on basis of one of the current 3 ‘facts’ or separation periods.
- The consultation will run for 12 weeks, closing on 10 December 2018.

[Press release: Rare 16th century painting of Spanish Armada at risk of export](#)

- Miniature shows Queen Elizabeth I watching the naval battle
- Artwork is one of few contemporary depictions of the Spanish Armada

An exceptionally rare painting depicting the defeat of the Spanish Armada, a naval campaign widely regarded to have changed the course of European history, is at risk of being deported from the UK unless a buyer can be found to match the asking price of £210,000.

Minister for Arts, Heritage and Tourism Michael Ellis has placed a temporary export bar on the ‘The Spanish Armada in the Year 1588’, by an unknown artist, to provide an opportunity to keep it in the country.

Depictions of the Armada, with the inclusion of its leading historical

figures, are exceptionally rare. Experts believe the painting was produced in around 1600, within a generation of the event.

It shows Queen Elizabeth I watching the naval engagement, accompanied by Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester. This reflected her personal intervention during the military campaign, when she rallied her troops through a speech at Tilbury.

In 1588 Philip II of Spain sent an 18,000 strong invasion force of 130 ships to England with the intention of overthrowing the Protestant Queen Elizabeth I and restoring Catholic rule. The defeat of the invading fleet has long been held as one of England's greatest naval victories, which increased the monarch's popularity and encouraged a new sense of patriotism in the country.

Experts believe that the work reflects a Dutch style of painting from this period, and may have been commissioned by an English patron with Dutch connections. It is signed in the lower right corner with an unverified artist's monogram (signed 'V.H.E').

Michael Ellis, Minister for Arts, Heritage and Tourism, said:

Although the Spanish Armada is one of the defining conflicts in England's naval history, contemporary depictions of it are exceptionally rare. This beautiful miniature commemorates one of the most celebrated events of Elizabeth I's reign and it is essential that we do our best to save this piece for the nation.

Little is known of the painting's whereabouts until it was sent on long-term loan to the Rijksmuseum, the Museum of the Netherlands, between 1975 and 1995.

There are only two miniature paintings known that represent the Armada events.

The decision to defer the export licence follows a recommendation by the Reviewing Committee on the Export of Works of Art and Objects of Cultural Interest, administered by The Arts Council. They made their recommendation on the grounds that the miniature is an exceptionally rare representation of a pivotal and celebrated event in national history, and is key to the study of European marine art and the event itself.

Reviewing Committee on the Export of Works of Art and Objects of Cultural Interest member Peter Barber said:

This vibrant miniature is one of the earliest and most vivid depictions of an episode of crucial importance for the history of England. That it is the work of a Flemish artist and shows the role played by Dutch ships, additionally underline the Armada's European-wide significance. Yet, familiar though the overall story may be, the miniature includes many intriguing details that need

further investigation, such as the prominence given to the ship and arms of the commander of the English forces, Lord Howard of Effingham.

There can be few items more justly called a 'national treasure' and it needs to be retained in this country so that it can be further studied and enjoyed.

The decision on the export licence application for the painting will be deferred until 13 December 2018. This may be extended until 13 March 2019 if a serious intention to raise funds to purchase it is made at the recommended price of £210,000 (plus VAT of £6,600).

Organisations or individuals interested in purchasing the painting should contact the RCEWA on 0845 300 6200.

Notes to editors

1. Details of the painting are as follows: Unknown artist, Monogrammist VHE (presumed Netherlandish School), The Spanish Armada off the Coast of England, Various dates, c.1590-1600, and 1600-10, probably 1600-05, Gouache heightened with gold, within gold framing lines on panel; signed lower right with the artist's monogram: V/HE, and inscribed upper centre: SPAENSCH ARMAD/INT IAR 1588 (Spanish Armada in the year 1588) in black. It is framed in a plain black Dutch-style frame with gold inner band, measuring 208mm x 410mm.
2. [Download](#) an image of the painting.
3. The Reviewing Committee on the Export of Works of Art and Objects of Cultural Interest is an independent body, serviced by The Arts Council, which advises the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport on whether a cultural object, intended for export, is of national importance under specified criteria.
4. The Arts Council champions, develops and invests in artistic and cultural experiences that enrich people's lives. It supports a range of activities across the arts, museums and libraries – from theatre to digital art, reading to dance, music to literature, and crafts to collections. www.artscouncil.org.uk.