

REVIEW WEBSITE LAUNCHES IN RESPONSE TO DODGY STUDENT HALL PROVIDERS AND GETS SUPPORTED BY 20 STUDENT UNIONS.

Wednesday 11 March, 2015

A disgruntled graduate from London has taken action against substandard student accommodation, by launching a "TripAdvisor" style review website for UK Students.

Kristian Else, 22, moved from Australia to London in 2011 to study at the University of Westminster, but was astonished along with his fellow flat mates, at the awful state of the private student accommodation provided by a market leader in the industry.

Kristian discovered his experience was not isolated, as student unions across the UK reported similar experiences within their local private halls. 20 Student Unions have now collaborated with the review website Hallbookers.co.uk, in order to improve standards nationally & to give students an independent guide to avoid the worst halls and find the best.

NUS reports that half of respondents who lived in privately owned accommodation felt that it wasn't good value for money [1]. Despite this, student accommodation prices have consistently been rising, with the average weekly rent in university owned accommodation double from 2002-2012[2].

Kristian Stated: "Hallbookers.co.uk connects students together so they can avoid being swayed by glossy marketing material, and can make an informed holistic decision to get the best accommodation and avoid the worst. Hall providers previously have had little to no accountability, which has allowed some of them to get away with things, but Hallbookers will completely change this."

Rima Amin, president of City University Students' Union who is leading a campaigning for compensation from Pure Student Living because of the "unacceptable conditions" [3] students faced at one of their sites, commented: "Hallbookers offers this platform for students to voice their experience and guide others. There are halls that have exhibited extremely poor standards and behaviours and it's important that these experiences are made public. It also encourages student accommodation providers to develop their services."

Sebastian Debrouwere, President of Kings College Student Union stated: "Good quality and affordable student accommodation has fast become the exception rather than the rule. On top of that, it's nearly impossible to find good and unbiased information amongst in the sea of glossy flyers and shiny websites"

Jacqui Hawthorn, Chief Operating Officer of Student Castle, a hall provider which is encouraging students to review their properties, commented: "At last a good honest student accommodation review guide. This should sort the good from the bad, give students all they need without having to trawl the streets. Well done Hallbookers and thank you!"

Hallbookers.co.uk has been launched nationwide this week, and lists every private hall in the UK. The supporting student unions and several hall providers are encouraging students to review their local accommodation.

END

Additional Info:

Kristian Else – 07 975 860 872 kcelse@gmail.com (More Student Union quotes available)

Rima Amin – president@city.ac.uk (Can provide specific quote about Pure City campaign)

References

- 1. <http://www.nus.org.uk/Global/Homes Fit For Study/Housing research report web.pdf>
- 2.

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- 3.http://www.culsu.co.uk/news/index.php?page=article&news_id=386131

Company Contact:

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[hallbookers.co.uk](https://www.hallbookers.co.uk)

T. 07975860872

E. kcelse@gmail.com

W. <https://www.hallbookers.co.uk>

Additional Contact(s):

Kristian Else, kcelse@gmail.com, 07 975 860 872

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