# **Support Student Rent Strikes**

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## Background:

1. Rent in halls and in the private sector has gone up significantly in the past five years, way above inflation.
2. Rents in University of Bristol halls are some of the highest in the UK.
3. Since 2016, students in Universities across the UK have been taking action to oppose rising rents by going on rent strike.
4. This tactic has been highly successful in the past with over 150 Bristol students going on rent strike in 2018, winning over £200,000 in rent cuts, bursary increases and compensation.

## Purpose:

1. To achieve dramatically reduced rents so that students can afford to live in University halls on their maintenance loan.
2. To make all halls accessible to students, no matter their income or background.
3. To support the welfare of students who are affected by the stress of extremely high rents.

## Actions:

1. The SU should support all student rent strikes called by students in aimed at University-owned accommodation and University leased accommodation
2. The SU should support a rent strike movement at Bristol financially (e.g. covering printing costs, campaign material costs and for transport for speakers coming to or going from Bristol) – we would ask for an upper limit of £500.
3. The SU should oppose measures by the University to intimidate people on rent strike by posting open statements in the press and on the student union website, and by calling out the University on any false threats it makes.
4. The SU should publicise and promote the rent strike by sending out all-student emails to those in University-owned halls about the calling of the rent strike, FAQs about rent striking, and statements debunking any false threats to rent strikers that the University makes, as well as publicising important rent strike events on their communications channels (e.g. email newsletters and social media).
5. The SU should provide practical support to stop the University evicting people on rent strike. For example, the union should provide advice and advocacy for rent strikers who the university are trying to evict or victimise.
6. The SU should make every attempt to act as a guarantor or, failing this, help rent strikers find a guarantor if the University stops being a rent striker's guarantor (e.g. in the case where the University acts as a guarantor for an international student).