

UoB Guide to Housing 2020

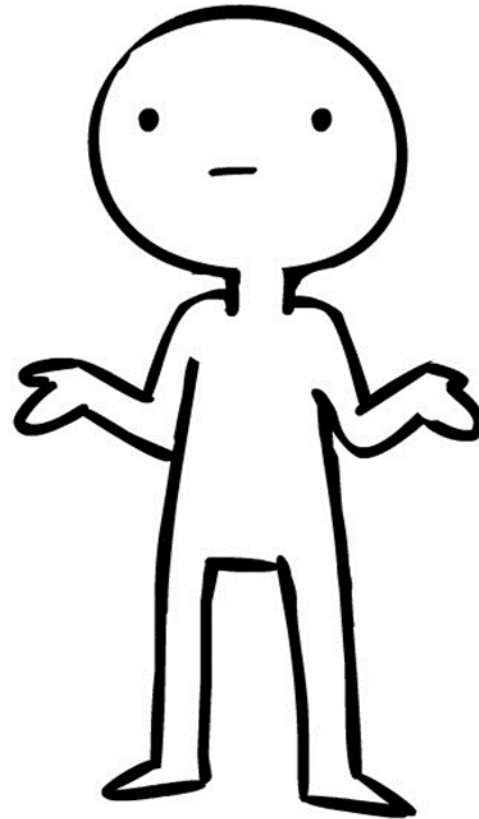
Finding Private Sector Accommodation



Finding Private Accommodation – Overview

- What the options are and where to find them
- Viewings, staying safe and securing the property
- How much it'll cost - Fees and the deposit
- The contract
- Bills and utilities
- Maintenance/repairs (damp and mould)
- Community - Being a Good Neighbour
- Where to find help and advice

Where. When and How



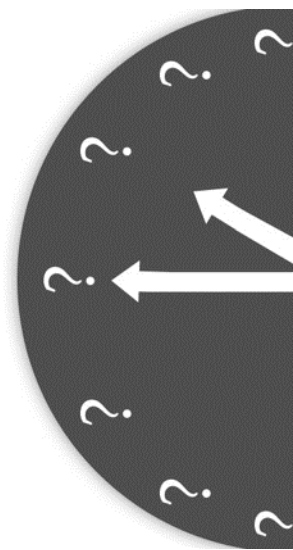
When – Our recommended timeline

November 2020 – January 2021:

- Research where you'd like to live and the type of property you'd like to have and can afford.
- Find and agree your housemate group.
- Agents will start advertising properties.

January 25th 2021: [StudentPad](#) launches which features 100s of private properties. Start looking for properties that suit your needs.

April – June: While there are plenty of properties, we do suggest you aim to have your property secured by June 2021.



Types of accommodation

Shared student home

What the majority tend to do. Sharing a house with your peers can be fun, but takes some organisation.

Purpose Built Student Accommodation

Similar to halls, but privately managed. Generally high-end. Longer contracts than university accommodation - therefore expensive.

- Hello Student
- Student Castle
- Unite
- Fresh
- Student Roost
- IQ



Homestay/Lodgings

Generally a more homely environment, living with landlord, more affordable and flexible.

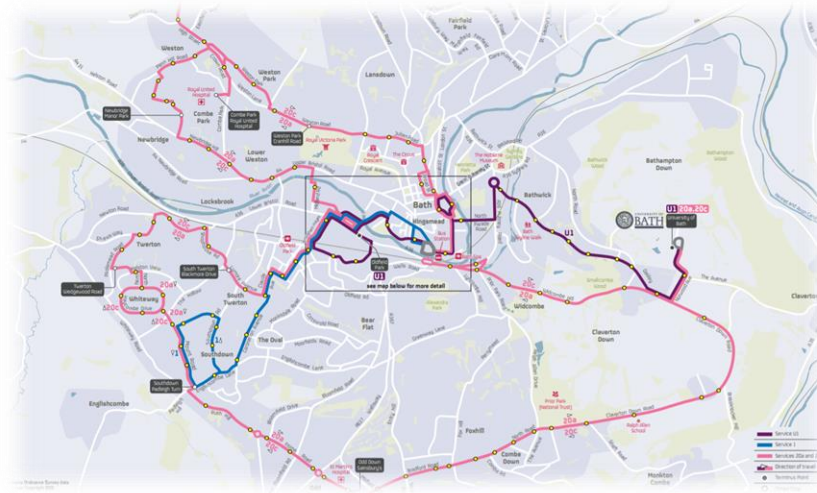
Places accommodation is advertised

- [Studentpad](#) launches 25/01/2021 and hosts properties from lots of different agencies and landlords.
- Websites include: [Rightmove](#), [Zoopla](#), [Gumtree](#), [Spare Room](#)
- Letting Agents websites directly (various in Bath)



Where to look

Locations are: Combe Down, City Centre, Newbridge Road, Oldfield Park, Southdown, Odd Down, Twerton or Widcombe.



[Student Community Partnership](#) - Details about the different neighbourhoods above including amenities and bus routes.

Who: Choosing Housemates

Budget

Average rent is around £500 to £550 per month (not including bills)

Lifestyle and Compatibility

Finding housemates

Housemate Finder Events – Register your interest [here](#)

[Studentpad Message Board](#)

[Housemate finder Facebook group](#)

Student Houses in Bath are most commonly 4/5 bedroom



What to Look for

- Is it a student property?
- The rent, the number of bedrooms, location.
- Is the property furnished (partly/fully)?
- White goods (fridge, freezer, washing machine)?
- How long is the contract (12months, 11 months, ½ rent in the summer)?



Avoiding Scams

Before paying any fees...

- View the property and meet the landlord
- Look for reviews
- Know that the person you are dealing with is genuine
- Don't be forced/pressured into anything
- Contact us for advice if you're unsure of anything
- Avoid anyone who asks for an upfront payment using:



Viewings



Viewings – Coronavirus, keeping yourselves and the community safe

- Initial viewings should be done virtually wherever possible. Agents/landlords should be able to help you with this
- Landlords/agents may limit the number of people allowed in the property at any one time
- Wear a suitable face covering as appropriate
- Viewings should be arranged by appointment only and 'open house' viewings should not take place
- When viewing properties in person, you should avoid touching surfaces wherever possible, wash your hands regularly and/or use hand sanitiser

Viewings – Manage your expectations



Viewings – Preparing and arriving

- Bring a phone/camera
- Be on time
- Take a look at the surrounding area and location
- Look at the roof, walls, garden, doors and window

Viewings – Inside the property

- Is the property warm?
- Condensation, damp or mould
- What furniture is included?
- Smoke and CO detectors?
- Bedroom sizes?
- Ask lots of questions

Do you like the property?

Viewings – What's next?

Don't rush! But do be decisive

Check with everyone in your group

- Get any promised fixes in writing
- You don't have to take the first property you see!

[Uni Homes Viewings Guide](#)

[Save the Student Viewings Guide](#)

Upfront Costs and Fees

Holding fee/deposit = No more than 1 weeks rent

Deposit = No more than 5 weeks rent

First Month's Rent

Tenant Fees Act 2019

As of June 2019, there are new restrictions on what upfront fees landlords and agents can charge.

Check with us or if you're presented with a fee, you're unsure of (upfront cost or a fee during the tenancy). [Trading standards](#) are responsible for enforcing the Tenant Fees Act.

Upfront Costs - Deposit

Deposit protection Schemes

- [Deposit Protection Service](#)
- [MyDeposits](#)
- [Tenancy Deposit Scheme](#)

[Shelter Advice – Deposit Protection](#)

Complete your Inventory as soon as you move in!

The Contract

Why does your contract matter?

- Legally binding
- Informs you of your obligations
- Shows your Landlord's obligations



AST (Assured Shorthold Tenancy)

When you are renting a property, individually or with a group.

License Agreement

When you are Renting a room. Examples include lodgings and purpose-built student accommodation. Deposit does not require protection!

The Contract

Joint and Several (most ASTs)

Everyone is equally responsible for the entire rent.

Head/Lead Tenant

First point of contact for Landlord

Guarantors (UK Based)

Family member or friend who can guarantee your rent



Guarantor Scheme



[Your Guarantor](#)

There is a charge...

3.5% of your rent amount for International Students and 5% for UK Students

Alternatives

[Housing Hand](#)

[Rent Guarantor](#)

Bills and Utilities

Share the responsibility

- Each tenant takes on either gas, electricity, broadband, water, insurance, TV license or a combination.
- Make sure everyone's name is included on every bill if possible.

Useful guides and tools:

[Splittable](#)

[Save the Student guide to energy bills](#)

[NUS save energy in rented accommodation](#)

Repairs and Maintenance

- Understand your responsibilities

[Shelter Advice – Repair Responsibilities](#)

- Read the contract
- Report repairs as soon as possible (in writing)
- Give your landlord a reasonable amount of time to respond
- Chase them if it is taking a long time
- The [local authority](#) can help if a landlord is refusing to do a repair



Damp and Mould



Damp and Mould

- Ventilate the property
- Heat the property regularly (especially during the winter months)
- Avoid drying your clothes in the house
- Wipe down any condensation
- Report any damp or mould problems to your landlord

[BANES – Help with damp and cold homes](#)

[NUS – House hunting advice](#)

Community – Be a Good Neighbour



Community – Be a good neighbour

- Get to know your neighbours
- Be aware of the noise you're making
- Avoid bringing a car (BA1 or BA2)
- Look after your environment

[Student Community Partnership](#)

[BANES rubbish and recycling](#)



OUR SHARED CITY
Student Community Partnership

Safety

- Lock doors and windows when you leave
- Clean regularly (have a Rota if necessary)
- Keep the property well heated
- Regularly check your smoke/heat detectors
- Keep hallways and entrances clear of clutter
- Do not leave cooking unattended and do not cook under influence of drink/drugs
- Get household contents insurance

- Be aware of safety when out and about
- Avoid travelling home on your own
- [Nightline](#) (term time only)
- [University Security](#) (even off campus) - 01225 383999



COVID-19 Shared Living

Be Safe. Keep ourselves and others safe from COVID-19

Be Kind. Take care of ourselves and others during these challenging times

Belong. Stay connected as individuals and communities, wherever we are

Together Each take steps, together, that add up to a safe and caring community



COVID-19 has meant we've all had to make changes to the way we live. By working together as a community, we can take steps individually and together, to minimise risk.

UoB Shared Living Agreement

Help and Advice

Student Living – Private Sector Accommodation Advice

Accommodation-private@bath.ac.uk

01225 38 6503

SU Advice and Support Centre

suadvice@bath.ac.uk

01225 38 6906

The SU Level 2

Help and Advice

Citizen's Advice

0344 848 7919



Shelter

0808 800 4444

Shelter