ALL STUDENTS, WHETHER IN UNIVERSITY OR PRIVATE ACCOMMODATION, ARE THE BEST AMBASSADORS FOR THE UNIVERSITY AND YOU ARE ALL PART OF THE LOCAL COMMUNITY; WITH THIS COMES RESPONSIBILITIES TOWARDS THOSE LIVING AROUND YOU.
WELCOME

Moving into your first student home is an exciting time! It’s a great opportunity to learn how to be more independent and how to live with other people in the Chester community.

We’ve designed this guide to make living in your student house easier, and it includes some handy tips on how to get on with your neighbours and housemates. The booklet contains all the wisdom on the essentials of living in your new home, so have a read, pick up some tips and enjoy your student experience!

“With great power comes great responsibility”
Uncle Ben, Spider-Man, 2002
YOU’RE A CESTRIAN NOW

University of Chester students tend to live in certain areas of Chester. Here’s our handy guide.

THE GARDEN QUARTER
This is the area of Chester encircled by Parkgate Road, Cheyney Road, Stadium Way, Sealand Road and the City Walls, with Garden Lane and Old Port Square as its commercial hearts. It’s a vibrant and diverse community made up of short term residents (that includes you) and long term residents including families and professionals.

The Garden Quarter has a very active Residents and Traders’ Association and if you live in the Garden Quarter you are automatically a member. They hold lots of events during the year.

HOOLE AND NEWTON
‘Nottinghoole’ won The Great British High Street Local Centre award in 2016. Hoole is a lively area with lots of local shops and some great restaurants.

Hoole has an energetic community group known as Nottinghoole and you can find details of the events they plan throughout the year on their website http://www.notting-hoole.co.uk

Newton is the area that our Kingsway Campus sits in and is mainly a residential area with lots of families living there.

BLACON
Blacon is situated adjacent to the Welsh border and is located on a hill, one mile to the north-west of, and overlooking Chester. The village is built on what was previously farming land and is surrounded by open countryside. Blacon has views across to the city centre of Chester and to the Welsh hills some twenty miles to the west.

THE CITY
Some of our students live within the famous city walls of Chester near picturesque and historic locations such as King Street and White Friars. These areas are made up of thriving communities of long term residents and local businesses.

Fascinating Fact
The Garden Quarter has its own theatre
http://theatreinthequarter.co.uk/
and its own Facebook page
https://www.facebook.com/gardenquarter/

Fascinating Fact
Hoole Road was infamous in medieval times as a place where bandits lay in wait to ambush travellers (Lucian the Monk, c.1200). We think things have changed a lot since 1200AD.

Fascinating Fact
The British Army maintained an army camp in south Blacon, from just before, to just after, the Second World War.

Fascinating Fact
Chester Racecourse is Britain’s oldest sporting venue (in continual use) with the first race occurring in 1539. Racing at the Roodee replaced a particularly violent traditional local football fixture, the substitution thought up by Mayor Henry Goe – hence apparently ‘gee-gees’.
THINGS TO DO

1. **CHECK INVENTORY**
   Take photos of any damage that was there when you arrived and keep a dated copy.

2. **TAKE METER READINGS, UNLESS YOUR BILLS ARE INCLUDED IN YOUR RENT**
   If they aren’t included get in touch with electricity, gas and water suppliers to set up an account. You can shop around using a comparison website.

3. **MEET NEIGHBOURS**
   Saying hello to your new neighbours can pay huge dividends.

4. **ARRANGE CONTENTS INSURANCE**

5. **COUNCIL TAX?**
   If you are all adults and full-time students in the house you are exempt from Council Tax. Cheshire West and Chester Council can check your exemption status via the University database if you complete the online form: https://online.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/CitizenPortal/formPortal.aspx?form=student_discount You can download a council tax exemption certificate on Portal at https://portal.chester.ac.uk/registryservices/Pages/council-tax-student-letters.aspx

6. **GET A TV LICENCE**
   No matter what device you use, you must be covered by a TV Licence if you watch or record live TV. If you’re not sure if you need one you can check online at http://www.tvlicensing.co.uk/check-if-you-need-one

ONE BIG HAPPY HOUSEHOLD

NOT GETTING ON WITH YOUR HOUSEMATES?
HERE IS SOME ADVICE FROM THE NUS:

For students moving away from their permanent residence, the transition can take a bit of adjustment, perhaps of your behaviours or assumptions or getting used to different kinds of people.

In your first year, it’s unlikely that you will have chosen your room or flatmates. This is often a good thing; you meet a wide range of different people with different life experiences to you and from different places.

However, occasionally personalities or lifestyles can clash and you may not like who you are living with. It’s OK not to like everyone, however it’s important that you are tolerant and polite to everyone and don’t let assumptions about people get the better of you – there are lots of people who can be best friends but very different from one another.

If there are people you really do clash with, or who upset you, it’s important that you communicate, negotiate, compromise and empathise with other people. The more you talk about things, the more you will understand why someone acts a certain way, or indeed help them to change their behaviour if it is upsetting you. Communication is essential; if possible you should at least try to talk directly to the person who is upsetting you.

Remember that Chester Students’ Union and Student Support in the University’s Student Futures department (Binks CBK113) can help with advice if any fall outs become too much.
First impressions count with your new neighbours. Say hello as soon as you move in, either knock on their door or pop a card with your contact details through their letter box. Taking a cake round couldn’t hurt. Let them know that they can contact you if there are any problems.

Try to be aware that your neighbours may not be students. They might have small children or be elderly or work night shifts (this can apply to students on placements too). In Chester there is sheltered housing for elderly residents in the Garden Quarter!

We hope that you enjoy your experience of living in the community and remember that if you feel that you are being unfairly treated by a neighbour or even somebody that you are living with that you can ask the Proctor’s Office or Chester Students’ Union for help.

STAYING IN?
Make an effort to keep the noise down to a reasonable level, especially later at night. If you or your favourite music can be heard out on the street it’s too loud. Keeping doors and windows shut can really help keep the noise down for neighbours.

GOING OUT?
If you are coming back from a night out in the early hours of the morning be considerate to the people living in Chester and return home quietly to avoid waking your neighbours.

HAVING A HOUSE PARTY?
Warn your neighbours in advance if you are having a party and agree a mutually acceptable time for the party to end. Give them a mobile number that they can contact if they aren’t happy. Try to keep noise to a minimum. Keeping windows and doors closed during the party can make a massive difference along with keeping the bass turned down. Remember to clean up any mess outside afterwards. When you are revising you’ll want this consideration returning.
If you haven’t registered with a GP and dentist during your first year then now is the perfect opportunity to do it. Staying healthy during your time at university will help ensure you get the most out of your time here and not miss out on anything from being unwell.

You can find the nearest GP and dental practice to where you live using the National Health Service search http://www.nhs.uk/pages/home.aspx

There is information for international students on healthcare on the University website at https://www1.chester.ac.uk/international/visas-arrival-and-enrolment/arrival-and-induction/health-and-insurance

Plan meals in advance and bulk buy. Spread the cost of staples like tea, coffee and milk by having a house kitty for them.

Switch off all unused lights and appliances (switching them off at the plug will save you even more). TVs, DVD players and sound systems use up to 90% of the energy in standby mode. Showers use approximately two-fifths of the amount of hot water needed for a bath.

Save on heating by not having it on all the time and wearing more jumpers. Set a timer on your boiler for when you want your central heating to come on automatically and keep the thermostat between 18-20 degrees centigrade.

Get an NUS Extra Card.
You get ridiculous amounts of discounts.
GET INVOLVED

You are now a short-term resident in the Chester community and maybe you’ll end up being a long-term resident one day. So get involved. There’s a lot going on.

VOTING

Be ready to exercise your democratic rights. Register to vote. A lot of people don’t realise but each time you change your address you need to re-register. You can register online at https://www.gov.uk/register-to-vote

VOLUNTEERING

JUST DO IT!

- Volunteering develops your existing skills and also gives you the chance to gain new ones
- It can help you to make more informed career choices
- It makes a positive difference to the lives of others
- It helps you to experience diversity
- It helps you to build confidence
- You can make new friends
- It’s good for your mind and body
- It helps you to connect to and feel established within your new University city
- It’s really good fun!

The most popular reasons our students give for volunteering is that they do it to develop their career skills, improve their CV and to give something back to their community.
THE GOOD NEWS
You will be pleased to know that the University of Chester has been ranked the 2nd safest University in the North West of England and 6th safest out of 103 nationally (Complete University Guide).

But, it’s also important to take some basic precautions.

TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF TOO
- Be vigilant on your way home from a night out
- Walk home with others or get a taxi
- Got a smart phone? Why not install the Companion app www.companionapp.io
- In an emergency, please call 999

TOP 10 COOKING SAFETY TIPS
- Keep your oven, hob and grill clean. A build-up of fat and grease can easily catch fire
- Don’t put anything metallic, such as tin cans, inside the microwave
- Keep cooking appliances in the kitchen. These rooms are designed for cooking appliances and the plug sockets are appropriately wired with the correct voltage. Bedrooms are not wired for such appliances
- Remember any type of pan can catch fire – this includes a wok and a grill
- Never fill a pan more than one-third full of oil. If the oils starts to smoke. It’s too hot-turn off the heat
- Swap your chip pan for an electric deep fat fryer – thermostatically controlled electrical deep fat fryers are much safer to use
- Never put water on a hot fat fire
- Have an escape plan if a fire does occur
- Finally, remember a working smoke alarm will give you those precious seconds to escape. Your landlord is responsible for ensuring your property has one

For further information and safety advice visit www.cheshirefire.gov.uk/public-safety/campaigns/home-safety/home-fire-safety-advice

TAKING A FEW SIMPLE PRECAUTIONS CAN REDUCE THE RISK OF BEING TARGETED BY CRIMINALS
- Remember to lock all outside windows and doors even when you are at home. 1 in 3 burglaries are a result of an open or unlocked door or window
- Don’t leave your valuables on view and if you’ve got an alarm use it
- Don’t forget you can register any valuable property (eg laptops, mobile phones, tablets) on www.immobilise.com free of charge. This will help the police to return lost or stolen items to their rightful owners and also acts as a deterrent to offenders

BE SAFE
HOME SAFETY
MOVING OUT

BILLS AND UTILITIES
- You are responsible for paying utility bills for up to and including the last day of your tenancy. It’s your responsibility to take final meter readings and to inform your service provider that you are moving out and need your final bill.
- Remember to cancel any subscriptions you may have such as broadband, cable television or newspaper deliveries. You may be eligible for a refund on your TV licence for the remainder of the year.

HANDING OVER THE KEYS
- Clean the house properly – or you may risk losing your deposit.
- Make sure you take an inventory and photos of the house before you leave, in case there are any conflicts regarding the state that the property was left in.
- Contact your landlord before you move out to agree when to hand over the keys of the house.

WASTE AND RECYCLING
- If you have lots of rubbish to dispose of, the council will collect it for a fee or you can take it to a local household waste recycling centre. For details of locations and opening hours please visit https://www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/residents/waste-and-recycling/waste-and-recycling.aspx
- Chester Students’ Union will be providing waste disposal areas towards the end of May and you can bring any unwanted items to be donated to charities.

RIGHTS OF YOUR DEPOSIT
Landlords can take money from your deposit to pay for the cost of removing rubbish or for cleaning at the end of your tenancy.

However, under Tenancy Deposit Protection Schemes, your landlord has to provide you with details of the insurance scheme your deposit has been placed in, within two weeks of receiving it, in case of disputes. This is a legal requirement.

You must claim at the end of your tenancy to get your deposit returned.

If you have any issues, please contact Chester Students’ Union for advice.
CAR WARS

THE UNIVERSITY STRONGLY ADVISES STUDENTS NOT TO BRING A CAR TO CHESTER

Obviously, there are certain circumstances when you would need to bring a car to University and our Parking Guidelines outline who is eligible to apply for a permit. If you live in private accommodation in Chester, unless you are from an eligible category, you will not be permitted to park on University sites.

However, Chester is a small city with good local and national public transport links. All areas of the country are easily accessible from Chester by train or coach and local buses run regularly.

The University’s Travel Plan Strategy 2015-2020 which promotes sustainable travel choices while you are at University can be seen on the University website https://www.chester.ac.uk/sites/files/chester/Travel_Plan_2015_A4_FINAL.pdf and contains details of lots of travel initiatives being put in place by the University.

BUG

The Bicycle User Group has around 40 members across our Campuses. They aim to contribute to the University’s cycle infrastructure plans and run events to encourage others to join. If you have any questions or would like to join just email greenchester@chester.ac.uk

The Green Chester travel link has all of the travel guides to and from each campus site http://www.greenchester.co.uk/node/9

“Bring your banger to Chester you should not”

Yoda
ON YOUR WAY OUT?

A common complaint the University, Chester Students’ Union and the Police receive is about the behaviour of students walking to Chester and walking back from Chester on nights out.

It’s easy to forget when you’re having a great night out but most residents of Chester go to bed before midnight and they aren’t massive fans of being woken up by people shouting, knocking on random front doors, kicking recycling over, weeing, vomiting or worse (we’re afraid worse has, allegedly, been known to happen) in the street. They also don’t like having half eaten kebab or your empties dumped on their doorstep. Well who would?

There are a couple of routes back to campus that we receive regular complaints about:

- King Street
- White Friars
- Canal Street and the Garden Quarter
- Water Tower Street

All of these areas are residential and have families, elderly people, professional people and students living in them. Ideally, we would ask that you don’t use King Street, White Friars or Canal Street as your route from and to your house on a night out. If you do use those routes we would appreciate you behaving in a sensible manner, keeping the noise down and waiting until you get back to your own home to use the toilet.

THEY COULD BE YOUR NAN OR GRANDAD

Where Canal Street meets Garden Lane there are two apartment blocks which are retirement properties, Sarl Williams Court and Homedee House. Many of the residents there are elderly and can be very alarmed by a lot of noise very late at night or very early in the morning.
GETTING IN TOUCH

Don’t forget, we are here for you. If you need any further information on any of the topics covered in this guide, or need support if something goes wrong, please don’t hesitate to get in touch.

CHESTER STUDENTS’ UNION
Advice and Representation Centre
Telephone: 01244 513397 or 01925 534660
Email: csuadvice@chester.ac.uk
Facebook: www.facebook.com/ChesterStudentsUnion
Twitter: @ChesterSU

STUDENT SUPPORT, STUDENT FUTURES
Telephone: 01244 511 550
Email: community@chester.ac.uk for living in the community questions
student.welfare@chester.ac.uk for any wellbeing or mental health issues

PROCTOR’S OFFICE
Telephone: 01244 511559

COUNTESS OF CHESTER HOSPITAL
Telephone: 01244 365000

POLICE (NON-URGENT)
Telephone: 101

GAS LEAK
Telephone: 0800 111 999

NHS 111
Telephone: 111

TAXI (CHESTER)
Telephone: 01244 372372, 01244 343 434, 01244 318 318

CITIZENS ADVICE
Telephone: 03444 772121

NATIONAL DEBT LINE
Telephone: 0808 808 4000

VICTIM SUPPORT
Telephone: 0845 30 30 900

CHESTER SEXUAL ABUSE SUPPORT SERVICE
Freephone: 0808 2840484

GREEN CHESTER
For details for tips on reducing energy bills and travelling more sustainably
Email: greenchester@chester.ac.uk
Twitter: @GreenChester
Facebook: www.facebook.com/greenchester