

Ready to **RENT**



STUDENT STEPS TO RENTING **THE FIRST STEPS**

Before you can even begin to gather your paperwork and look at houses you need to consider these three things:

Who will your housemates be?

Deciding who you are going to live with can be a daunting task. While your first months at University should have given you some wonderful and solid friendships, it's important to consider if they are the right people to live with for the next academic year.

It is worth considering if you and your friends fit together well as housemates, for example: if you're super clean, are you going to get annoyed if your friend doesn't wash up their plates for a week? Or, if you like partying is it best to share a house with your friend who is asleep by 10pm every night?

The best thing to do is sit down with your potential housemates and discuss any differences you might have and your wants and needs of a housemate, before you move in together to ensure living together is right for all of you.

It's worth remembering that sometimes your best friends don't have to live with you!

Where will you be looking (location)?

In Lincoln, we have four main areas of student housing (not including our Halls of Residence!) These are: High Street, Monks road, West End and Uphill. Each area offers a different living experience and it's important to consider which is right for you before you sign a contract.

If you like a quiet, mainly student focussed area then The West End is right for you and if the thought of walking up Steep Hill every day fills you with dread, then Uphill probably isn't the right location for you.

*If you want to chat to us about the local area and finding the right place to live
– you can talk to our Housing Team at: www.lincolnstudentlettings.com/contact-us*

What is the budget?

So, you have considered who you are going to live with and where in the city you want to live, now you need to think about your budget!

It's important to really think about your monthly rent and how much you (and your housemates) can afford as rent usually takes up the largest sum of your monthly costs. It is also important to consider if bills are included in the rent and if not, whether the additional cost is still within your budget. For tips on budgeting go to our budgeting guide!

*You've thought about who you're going to live with, where you're going to live and your budget
- now you can finally start thinking about looking at houses!*

STEPS TO RENT- A SUMMARY

Prepare the paperwork

The documents that you may be asked to provide depend on the type of accommodation and tenancy agreement that you are signing. You will not be required to provide your right to rent if you live in student accommodation such as halls of residence, however if you are privately renting you will be required to provide documents that prove your right to rent.

A table of the documents that you can provide can be found on the following Government site here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/right-to-rent-document-checks-a-user-guide>

International students – If you are an international student, you may need to provide different documents alongside this to show you can rent in the UK. For support with this, please contact the University's International Advice Team via internationaladvice@lincoln.ac.uk for specialist support and guidance.

Gather your housemates and start looking for properties

Once you have all your paperwork organised and prepared you can begin to search for properties, this can be done online or with a lettings agency who can use your requirements to find houses that are well suited to you. Alternatively, as a group you could get together and look online at:

www.lincolnstudentlettings.com

It's important to ensure the needs of all your housemates are considered when you are looking at houses as well as the size, number of bedrooms and crucially the number of bathrooms!

Book viewings

So, you've got your housemates and found some houses you all like. The next step is arranging a viewing to see those houses. It's important that when you go and view the house you all go to make sure it's right for the group as a whole.

While it may seem like houses are being snapped up by students every second, Lincoln has an array of houses so you don't need to go for the first house you see. Take your time and consider if the house is actually right for you. Houses remain on the market as late as February, so you don't need to sign a contract as soon as the first semester starts.

When viewing the property, it's important to look closely at the house, what it contains and its condition. For example, does the property contain a toaster or do you need to organise to bring one within your group? Or do all the bedrooms have a desk? Also, think about if the location of the house is right for you - is it close enough to university and the nearest shop or town? Is there public transport nearby? Is the area noisy? Visit the street at different times of day.

When looking at the condition of the property keep an eye out for any potential problems. This could be: door & window security; damp; insulation; pests; ventilation in the kitchen and bathrooms; and whether or not the property has a carbon monoxide detector.

Can you view all of the property's safety certificates? Of course, if the property is accredited with the Students' Union accreditation scheme these are not things you will have to worry about as they will have already been checked!

Once you are happy with the condition of the property, take the time to understand the costs associated with it. Are bills included, and if so, is that all bills (water, gas, electric) or do you have to budget for some? Is WiFi included and does the property come with a TV licence? - these are extra costs that may sneak up on you if you don't consider them. Make sure to ask questions to fully understand all aspects of the property. This includes: the costs involved; the contract length (this is so you can budget correctly - if a house is more expensive per week but has a shorter contract it may work out cheaper in the long run!); and how repairs are carried out.

Agree with your housemates on the property and hold it by paying the deposit

Once you have decided on a house as a group, the next step is signing your contract and paying your deposit. Once you receive your contract make sure you take some time to read over it and understand it – Landlords must legally give you a minimum of 24 hours to seek advice on the terms of your contract. If you need any advice on your contract you can go to the SU Advice Centre. In most cases you will be asked to find a guarantor, this is someone who is financially responsible if for whatever reason you cannot make the payments, they must be based in the UK and be financially stable.

Your responsibilities as a tenant will depend on the type of contract you are signing, so it is important that you find this out. Most student properties use a "joint and several" contract – this would mean that you and all of your housemates are equally liable for the rent and any associated charges for communal areas. If you are unsure of the type of tenancy agreement you are signing, one of our SU Advisors can go through the agreement with you and guide you through your rights and responsibilities.

Once you have done this it's time to pay your deposit, this should equate to a maximum of 5 weeks' rent and covers the landlord in the case of damages. The deposit will be held in an approved scheme until the end of your tenancy- make sure you know which one this is!

By law, your landlord has to enter your deposit into a protection scheme. There are three schemes which could be used: Deposit Protection Service, Tenancy Deposit Scheme and MyDeposits. You should receive written notification when your deposit has been entered into one of the schemes.

Move in

That's it! You have a house for the next academic year, time to move in and celebrate with your housemates.

It's likely that if you are moving into a student house you will have already lived away from home for at least a year but if you're stuck on what you may need to pack have a look at our 'what to pack' checklist!