



uwe students' union
making a difference to students' lives



University of the
West of England

2014/15

my handy student living guide

Welcome



Students bring economic, cultural & social benefits to the city. Love your time in Bristol, it's a great city with plenty to do within its diverse communities.

Welcome to your new (or old) neighbourhood.

We've put together this guide to community living to help you get the most out of your time in your new home and neighbourhood.

This includes top tips on knowing your rights as a tenant, your responsibilities as a tenant, what to do if a conflict arises and how to deal with it, how to keep your property and personal belongings safe as well as useful maps and contacts.

If you need any help or assistance with any community, housing or landlord issue or just general advice please contact either UWE's community liaison manager, community@uwe.ac.uk, 01173281366 or the Students' Union Advice Centre on 01173282676 or www.uwesu.org/support/advice-centre

We hope you find this guide useful and enjoy your year.

The Community & Representation Team at UWE Students' Union

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Top tips for moving in



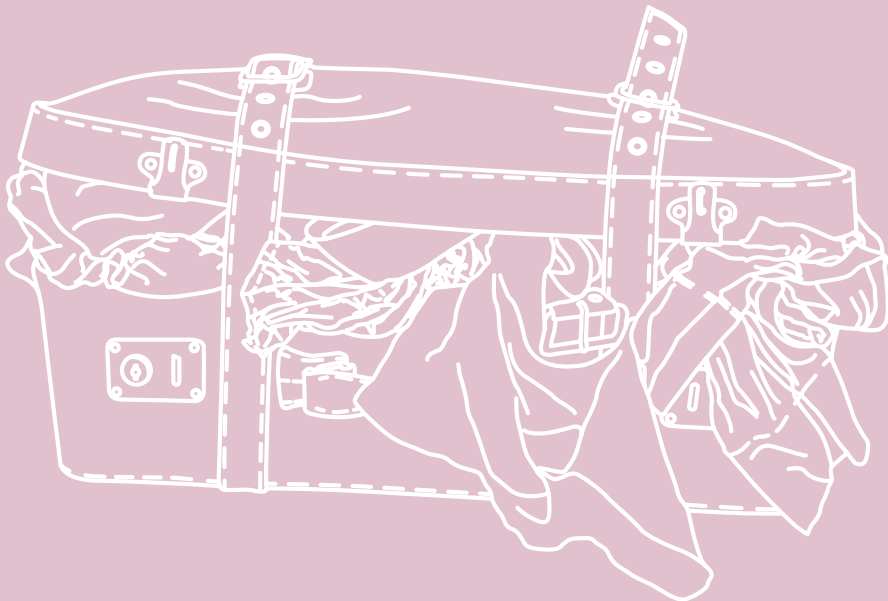
- Check through the inventory (a list of the entire house contents and their conditions). Take photos of every room. Is everything working? List any faults and inform the landlord in writing. Again take photos of any faults you see and send them to yourself or landlord to record the evidence.



- Take Gas, Electrical and Water meter readings – inform companies of new occupant details



- Contact Council Tax office - make sure they know all occupants are students and provide the correct verification
- Redirect mail to your new address – www.postoffice.co.uk/redirection



- Organise contents insurance
- Ensure you have a valid TV licence – www.tvlicensing.co.uk
- Ask your landlord to check that previous tenants have returned all keys to the property.
- Ensure that you know which Tenancy Deposit Scheme your landlord is using.
- Say hello to the neighbours and please be considerate to them. You never know when you might need their help.
- Check that you have all your correct bins for waste and recycling. You can check which bins you should have at www.bristol.gov.uk. Check that you know when your bin collections are. To find out you can contact Bristol City Council on 0117 9222100 or South Gloucestershire Council on 01454 868000. You can also arrange a bulky waste collection through this number if necessary.



Any problems or questions?

Visit www.uwesu.org/advice for further advice or pop into the UWE Students' Union Advice Centre who will be happy to help.

Did you know...

You have the right to:

- **Your landlord's contact details**
You should be able to contact your landlord directly or the managing agents about any problems.
- **Live in a house which is habitable**
Your landlord is legally obliged to keep in good repair the drains and gutters, walls, boiler, toilets, sinks, and shower or bath. You would be expected to replace light bulbs, washers, alarm batteries and unblock drains if clogged by a tenant or guest.
- **24 hours notice if your landlord needs to come round (unless it is an emergency)**
This also applies to your letting agents, workmen and any potential tenants viewing the property.
- **See a copy of the annual Gas Safety certificate**
- **See a copy of the Energy Performance certificate**
- **Have your deposit protected, and information about who is protecting it**
It is your money and you have the right to have it returned, so long as you have not caused damage to the property or owe any money. Your landlord can only take money out to cover any financial loss caused by the tenants.
- **Live in the house for the length of your contract**
Your landlord can only tell you to move out early if there is a valid break clause, through mutual agreement to 'surrender' the tenancy or by going to court to get a possession order. This will only be granted automatically if you are in at least two month's rent arrears.

You have a responsibility to:

- **Let your landlord/agent know of any repairs that need doing**
Do it in writing so that you have evidence of when you let them know.
- **Abide by the terms of your contract, as long as they are fair**
This could include things like not smoking in the house, maintaining the garden or ensuring the rubbish is correctly disposed of.
- **If you intend to have a party inform your neighbours and give them a contact number in case they need to contact you**
Keep noise levels to a reasonable level.
- **Keep the house in reasonable condition and ensure that the landlord's property does not deteriorate beyond normal use**
Any damage caused by you or your guests can be deducted from your deposit.
- **Not cause nuisance to surrounding neighbours**
Excessive noise at any time of the day or night can be deemed anti social and can be investigated by Environmental Health. Also the University may be contacted and may discipline students who are in contravention of the student conduct policy.
- **Pay your rent on time, and pay the bills until the end of your contract**
If you are on a joint contract then all of you are liable.



Getting involved in your local community

Community reps

Community Reps are students who act as ambassadors and community organisers to empower local residents and students to work together more coherently and empower each other, breaking down a mentality of “us and them”. This will mean organising get togethers, volunteering opportunities and engaging in local campaigns to shout loud and proud about the great work that UWE students do.

Voter Registration

Whenever you move into a new place, you'll need to re-register to vote. Registering to vote is important – if you're on the electoral register then policy makers will try to appeal to your vote by pledging change on issues that affect you.

And quite simply – only if you're registered will you be able to vote! There's a general election in 2015; it'll be an excellent

time to voice your opinions so it's important that you register. You can now do it online – www.gov.uk/register-to-vote you'll need your National Insurance Number.

Student Community Partnership

This is a group that brings together both Bristol universities, the Students' Unions, the Council and other key partners from across the city to discuss issues affecting the city of Bristol. Want to know more? Check out the website: www.bristolstudentcommunitypartnership.co.uk

Community Together Fund

Got an idea for a community project that will bring the community together? Action Day? Street party? Art project? Community Fun Day? Environmental project? Then apply for the Community Together Fund!

The Community Together fund offers grants of up to £250 for projects linking students, local residents, community organisations and local agencies.

Check out www.uwe.ac.uk/communityliaison for further details.

“Building better relations.”



Campaigns

5 steps to becoming a Campaigner



What

is it you would like to change, improve or happen? Make sure you're clear of your objectives.



Why

is this important? We all have a voice and the right to be heard – campaigning is one way to do this.



Who

are your target audience? Whose attention are you trying to grab?



How

Write an action plan. Utilise Student Media such as the Western Eye or Hub Radio. Get support from your Students' Union by emailing union@uwe.ac.uk



Where

Use your campus! Email union@uwe.ac.uk for help acquiring permissions for stalls, or help and advice in campaigning across the city.

Looking to campaign on an issue? Whether it is housing, cycling, health services or just getting a better deal from the shop on campus, follow some of these quick and easy steps to get campaigning!

HIDDEN COSTS

Last year, we gathered lots of feedback from you on what costs you were paying on top of your tuition fee. We took

the evidence to the university and jointly wrote a paper with Academic Services which has resulted in:

- All undergraduate students will receive £15.00 printing credit for per year
- Undergraduate students at Bower Ashton campus will receive £75.00 credit for materials per year

www.uwesu.org/hiddencosts

COMING SOON

"Don't rent yet"

This campaign has been set up to warn students of the dangers of renting too fast. If you want to get involved or if this has affected you in the past then join in and help out with the campaign. #NoRush

Contact your Students' Union Vice President Scarlett:

✉ vpcommwelfare@uwe.ac.uk
 f www.facebook.com/VPCommunityandWelfare
 t [@VPCommWelfare](https://twitter.com/VPCommWelfare)

THE ONLY WAY IS WESSEX?

Consulting on your service, like a bus!

With student feedback your Students' Union lobbied the First and Wessex buses to run later and include Student Discount on every journey.

www.uwesu.org/buses

Why not sign up and get involved with campaigns?

Email vpcommwelfare@uwe.ac.uk for more information!

- Write an action plan
- Utilise Student Media such as the Western Eye or Hub Radio
- Get support from your Students' Union by emailing union@uwe.ac.uk and get involved!

Travel

Buses



First provide the majority of bus services in Bristol and offer discounts for students with your student ID.

➤ www.firstgroup.com/bristol

Wessex Star services offer an economical bus network for students, staff & public in Bristol.

➤ www.wessexstar.com

*Student Discount
when you show
your student ID
on any Wessex
or First bus!*

Check out our website for more info on bus routes in your area

➤ www.uwesu.org/support/bristol

Cycling to campus



There's no need to worry about busy roads when cycling in Bristol – our campuses all have excellent off-road paths that are often much quicker than the surrounding roads. There is ample cycle parking on each campus.

Check out all cycling routes to your campus:

➤ www.uwesu.org/cycle

There are cycle repair kits at Frenchay Community Hub and Bower Ashton porters' lodge.



For Bristol cycle maps showing traffic-free routes, quiet roads, busy roads, contours, the national cycle network, plus the main destinations and attractions in the local area, visit

➤ www.betterbybike.info





THE TRAVEL CHALLENGE

These four Bristol students all live on Gloucester Road. Here is a day in their lives getting to uni. Bristol is the most congested city in the UK, and the UK is the most congested country in Europe. So guess who has the longest journey? (clue... it's Mike).



* Real times from Oct 2013 Travel Challenge

Illustration: singleleg.co.uk



CYCLING

Jess has a major sleep in every morning... yes, I'm jealous too... look at her smug grin. Also because she burns off so many calories whilst riding, she gets to eat like a demon.

- VS -



PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Martha jumps on the bus to get to uni. It speeds along at quite a pace, because it has its very own bus lane. Martha gets to chat with friends and use her smart phone to look at videos of dogs getting shocked at their own farts...

- VS -



WALKING

NEWSFLASH! Human beings have evolved to walk on their hind legs. Doing so means they can reach for things easily and walk into uni. Derek here whistles a happy tune on his way.

- VS -



DRIVING

This chap... let's call him Mike... because that's his name. He tries taking his car into uni. BIG FREAKING MISTAKE. As you can see here, the traffic hardly moves and he's even having to pay for this privilege.



Green stuff

Collection largely depends on where you live. Visit

➤ www.bristol.gov.uk/page/bins-recycling-and-street-cleaning/bin-and-recycling-collection-dates

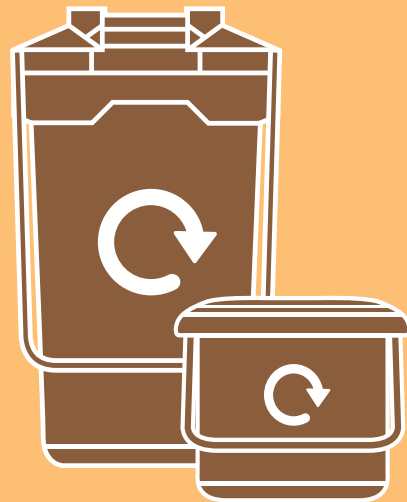
to find out when your local collection is, or just ask a neighbour in the know.

You can even recycle with no bins just segregate your recycling into clear plastic bags and leave them on the curb on collection day.

Never fear if your recycling box isn't near. It takes seconds to order a new one

➤ www.bristol.gov.uk/page/bins-recycling-and-street-cleaning/order-new-bins-boxes-and-nets

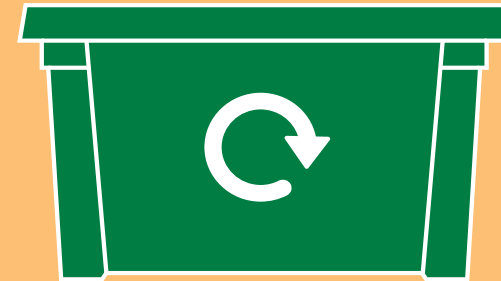
Waste not want not.



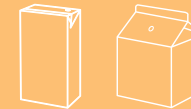
What you can put in your food waste bin

All cooked and uncooked food including:

- bread, pasta, rice and cereals
- cheese and dairy products
- coffee grounds, tea leaves/bags
- egg shells
- fruit waste
- meat, fish and bones
- plate scrapings
- vegetable peelings



What you can recycle in your green box



Cartons (Tetra Paks)

All food and drink cartons. Please rinse and flatten.



Cardboard

All cardboard. Please flatten, fold and remove tape.



Plastic bottles

All types of bottles. Please rinse and squash.



Plastic packaging

Tubs, trays and pots. Please rinse and squash.



Cans

All food and drink cans. Please rinse.



Foil

Foil and take-away trays. Please rinse and squash.



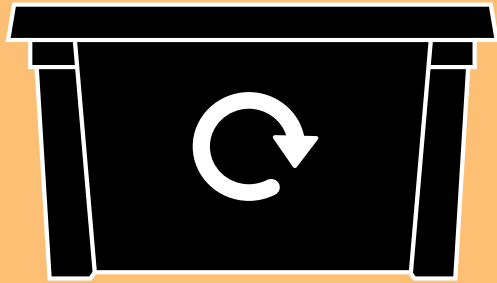
Aerosols

Empty aerosols only please. Remove lids.



Lids

Metal and plastic.



What you can recycle in your black box



Directories

Including Yellow Pages.



Batteries

Keep them together in a small bag.



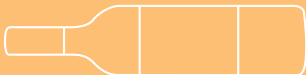
Car batteries

Please put next to your box.



Engine oil

In a sealed container.



Glass

Bottles and jars, all colours. Please rinse.



Paper

All types except tissue. Please make sure shredded paper is contained (e.g. in a bag or envelope).



Shoes

Please tie in pairs.



Spectacles

All types.



Textiles

Please put in an untied bag to keep materials dry.

For any big bulk items that need collection have a look at these resources, some pick up for free and may even pay you for your goods. Looks like it's time to get rid of that disregarded back yard sofa in way of a new summer BBQ.

**Green!
Free! Easy!**
Our planet, our responsibility.



www.groups.freecycle.org/group/FreecycleBristol

SOFA PROJECT
SAVING YOUR PLANET SAVING YOUR MONEY

www.sofaproject.org.uk



www.recycleanddonate.co.uk



www.recycle.co.uk

Volunteering at UWE

Love Bristol? Want to get involved and meet new people?

Volunteering is one of the most rewarding things you can do while you're at university. It's great to put your free time to good use, and it looks great on your CV. You might want to make a difference in your local community, get some work experience related to your degree, improve your employability, learn new skills, do some training, meet new people or just have fun.

UWE Volunteering offers a huge range of opportunities to get involved. Whatever your skills, talents, and interests we will find a role to suit you.



One-off **action days** are a great way to try something out if you're not sure about making a regular commitment. UWE Students' Union organises regular action days all through the year, such as the Big Beach Clean at Sand Bay near Weston-Super-Mare, or community gardening at the local city farm.

Our **top picks** by sector are carefully selected projects that will help you to develop the skills and experience you need with a range of charities and not-for-profits across Bristol.

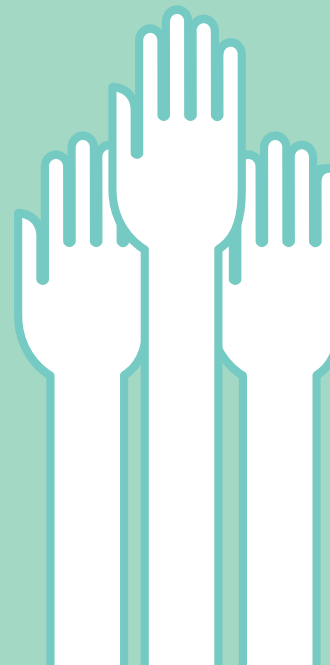
UWE Volunteering is a partnership between UWE and UWESU.

For more information

🖱 www.uwe.ac.uk/volunteer
✉ volunteering@uwe.ac.uk

Join one of our **student-led projects** such as Silver Surfers, tutoring older people in basic IT skills, and Creative Club, providing activities for people with learning disabilities. Or, if you have your own idea, get support, training and funding to set up your own campaign, event or community activity.

Volunteer in a local school as a reading buddy, number partner, or classroom assistant. Or help run workshops in schools about your subject or passion – whether it's philosophy, culture and music from your home country, dance or drama, or something else entirely.



Crime and security

Did you know? 40% of burglaries are crimes of opportunity where doors or windows have been left open or unlocked.



Top Tips

- Keep doors and windows locked when you go out
- Keep valuables out of sight, away from windows and don't leave them on show in your car
- Make a note of serial numbers of valuables so they can be traced back to you

Don't lose your laptop with your dissertation, course work or revision notes!

Top 5 items most wanted by burglars: laptops, smartphones, cash and jewellery, bikes, TVs/DVDs.

Register valuables with www.immobilise.com and download laptop/smartphone tracking software to use.

Arrange home insurance and take photos of your valuables.

The University has its own Police officer PC Mark Brain
✉ markr.brain@avonandsomerset.police.uk
☎ 0117 32 82669

If you have a Police emergency dial 999. For non emergency dial 101.

You will need a crime reference number for any insurance claims.



Have a safe night out



Know your limits

Stay safe, buddy up

Get home safely

Put emergency numbers (ICE) in your phone

Don't let good nights turn bad

Top tips

- Bristol is a safe place to be a student in, just by following some simple tips to prevent becoming a victim. Make it a night to remember not one to forget.
- Know your limits.
- Get home safely
- Look after your friends
- Book a taxi for the way back, or let people know where you're going
- Stay together

Watch out!
Drinks can be spiked

Planning a party?

Here are some party top tips to help you not upset the neighbours.

Ask the neighbours

Discuss with your neighbours in advance if you're having a party to make sure it's ok. Give them a contact number and tell them when it will finish.

Keep it inside

If you can, keep the party indoors, and keep the windows and doors shut. This makes a really big difference.

Weekend parties are best

You'll get fewer complaints on a weekend.

Look after/respect your home

It's your house and responsibility. A trashed house will only fall back on you and cost you a lot of money!

Keep the bass down

A booming bass will seriously upset the neighbours trying to sleep next door. Keep bass speakers and sound systems away from the walls and lower those bass levels.

Party in town

If you are planning a big party think about hiring a venue in town. There are loads of party places available.

Respect

If you are going out or coming back from a night out have some consideration for your sleeping neighbours.

Conflict resolution

If someone comes round or calls you to complain, there are a few golden rules on how to respond.

- Never be rude or aggressive even if they are. If you feel threatened call the Police.
- Keep calm in the situation.
- If you feel the complaint is justified give an apology. Saying sorry often defuses the situation.
- Inform them that you will turn the noise levels down. Let them know when the party will end. (Be reasonable)
- If, after the party, and after your apology the neighbour is still aggressive contact the community liaison manager at UWE who will mediate on your behalf. Alternatively you can contact the Students' Union Advice Centre who also offer a mediation service.

UWE Students' Union Advice Centre

✉ advice@uwe.ac.uk
☎ 0117 32 82676



Health & wellbeing

Health and wellbeing are essential for productivity and learning and have been shown to positively impact these as well as satisfaction and retention amongst staff and students. In fact, there's research to show wellbeing is one of the most important contributors to the success of individuals, communities and societies overall. That's why at UWE we go above and beyond to create and promote healthier working, learning and social environments.

Useful links and places to visit:

- www.wellaware.org.uk
- Health Centre
- Off the Record
- Brook
- The Care Forum



Moving out top tips

There are many legitimate reasons why deductions may be made from your deposit. Below are a number of tips to consider when vacating the property to help avoid problems:

- The cooker is clean, including the oven
- The fridge/freezer is empty from food; the freezer has been defrosted, all shelves are clean and it has been switched off with the door left open
- All cupboards are empty of food and wiped clean

- All communal areas and individual rooms have been vacuumed
- Vacuum cleaner is empty
- All rubbish has been removed from the property, and cleared from the back garden
- All posters and blue tack/pins/sellotape have been removed
- All furniture that was in the room at the start of the tenancy has been returned to its correct place
- Paint work and window sills have been wiped
- The toilet, sink and bath have been cleaned
- All surfaces, including floor, have been cleaned
- All toiletries have been removed and bins emptied
- Keys have been returned

From 6th April 2007 all deposits paid for a new Assured Shorthold Tenancy will be kept in one of the four Government-backed Tenancy Deposit Protection Schemes. This means that your deposit should be returned to you within 10 working days of you vacating the property. Any disputes which arise will be dealt with by a dispute resolution scheme and the landlord can only withhold the amount that they believe you owe whilst negotiations are taking place, not the full amount.

Useful contacts

Scarlett Oliver, Vice-President Community & Welfare

📍 5F Frenchay Campus

✉ vpcommwelfare@uwe.ac.uk

🖱 www.uwesu.org/presidents

UWE Students' Union

🖱 www.uwesu.org

✉ (General Enquiries): union@uwe.ac.uk

📞 +44 (0)117 32 82577

Students' Union Advice Centre

🖱 www.uwesu.org/advice

✉ advice@uwe.ac.uk

Students' Union Lettings

🖱 www.uwesu.sites.letmc.com

📞 +44 (0)117 328 6600

Bristol City Council

🖱 www.bristol.gov.uk

UWE Main Reception

✉ infopoint@uwe.ac.uk

📞 +44 (0)117 9656261

UWE Community Liason Manager

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Student Community Partnership

🖱 www.bristolstudentcommunitypartnership.co.uk