

## **Types of Accommodation Advertised**

### **Whole shared Houses**

These entail having your own room (unless you agree to share) and sharing the use of the kitchen, bathroom, and living room.

The most common house size is for 4, offering much more choice. Early in the house hunting season landlord will expect you to approach them as a group to take on the whole property.

### **Rooms in shared houses**

Some landlords let their property on an individual basis and therefore would let one room in a shared house. Once again under this arrangement you would have your own room and share the kitchen, bathroom and living room with the other occupants.

If you are not in a group to go house hunting, but you are looking to share a student house you will need to consult this list.

### **Self contained flats**

In and around Durham most flats / small houses are 2 bed roomed rather than one, although there are a few one bedroom flats for singles or couples.

### **Bedsits**

This is a room in a shared house but with a greater element of privacy. There is usually a lock on each bedsit door. The room would normally include either some form of kitchen or bathroom area. You would usually expect to share some facilities with the other occupants in the house.

### **Room in an Owner's Home**

For those looking for accommodation for shorter periods of time, for example 3 months or 6 months, this type of arrangement can often prove to be the most suitable.

Some landlords offer the traditional style of lodgings arrangement providing breakfast and evening meals. Others are either young professionals, recent graduates or students themselves looking to rent out rooms. In these cases the arrangement usually takes on a more flat share approach rather than the traditional landlord and lodger scenario.

This can often be a good value for money option. Check what is included in the rent - heating, bills, food?

The arrangements are often informal and you will need to be sure you can agree to any house rules which may exist. *However you need to be aware that your rights as a tenant are substantially reduced in this arrangement*

## **Where do students live?**

### **The City Centre (including Elvet, Viaduct & Claypath)**

As the name suggests this is the area found in the heart of the City. It is the first choice for the majority of students. Most student housing can be found in three pockets.

The most popular and hence the most expensive is around the Library and science site. Whilst they do offer the possibility of rolling out of bed and into a lecture 2 minutes later there are severe problems with car parking in this area.

The viaduct is very popular with students contains increasing numbers of streets that are almost exclusively occupied by students.

Durham City Council is now issuing parking permits. In some areas these permits are restricted to two permits per property. This could potentially cause you additional problems as there is no guarantee a permit will be granted to you.

Car parking is also a nightmare in this area of town. The small terraced streets were not designed with student households in mind. Consequently, you are lucky if you can find one parking space outside your home, never mind 3 or 4. Once again this is a favourite spot for enforcing University regulations on not only car parking but also student behaviour. All local residents have the telephone number of the University Security hotline.

The other associated problem with such a densely populated student area is property crime. Student homes are easy pickings; security is an issue to consider when you live in this exclusive area.

Another area of the City which is popular is Claypath, found on the other side of the Market Place. It offers very easy access into town, and is

popular with St Hild & St Bede and School of Education students as it is on the right side of town. Claypath actually starts at the Market Place; halfway up the bank it becomes Gilesgate.

### **Neville's Cross and Merryoaks**

This is an area past the hill colleges which is within a 15-20 minute walk of the Students Union. It is very popular with all students, particularly those at the hill colleges and Business School. Apart from the traffic, it is probably one of the nicer student areas in Durham. It is served by a number of local pubs, a well-stocked shop and a post office.

If you can't face the uphill walk on the way home there are many buses which run from the bus station.

These areas have the added benefit of being quite studenty whilst not *all* attracting the high rents of the city centre.

### **Crossgate Moor**

This area is just a bit further round to the north from Neville's Cross and may entail a bus journey on less inviting days. You should not expect to pay more rent here than Neville's Cross / Merryoaks areas, unless the property is of a higher standard.

### **Gilesgate**

This area is home to quite a substantial student population, especially popular with those students at St Hild & St Bede College or those studying at the School of Education.

Some areas of Gilesgate are more student friendly than others. Ask current tenants and landlord. Gilesgate is served with a Kwik Save and Gilesgate Moor has a Tesco supermarket. Both areas have a local fish & chip shop.

### **Bowburn**

In between the A1 and the Science Site, it is a former mining village about three miles south of the main Library. It now houses approximately 100 students. Property in Bowburn is usually much less expensive than the areas closer to town. Some properties are being offered for as little as £37 per week, often for only nine months of the year.

There are regular buses which pass the science site. Some have discounts for students. Bowburn has several pubs, a Chinese takeaway, Indian restaurant, a newsagent, a well stocked local shop, fish 'n chips shop, a Co-op, chemist, post office and doctors surgery.

### **Langley Moor**

Approximately five minutes further on beyond Neville's Cross (by bus). Langley Moor once again has its own little enclave of students. If you have a bike it will keep you fit, failing that buses appear frequently to transport you to the bus station. Rents are cheaper than either Neville's Cross or Crossgate Moor.

Langley Moor has the added benefit that it is probably the best served area for local shops, pubs, and particularly takeaways. The main disadvantage of living in this area is that in the morning the traffic can be slow passing through Neville's Cross and can add a good fifteen minutes to any bus journey.

### **Meadowfield**

Another former mining village, which runs on from Langley Moor. Property prices tend to reflect those of Langley Moor. Once again the main disadvantage of this area is the traffic into town in the morning.

### **Framwellgate, Pity Me and Newton Hall**

Enticingly close to the Arnison Centre for Sainsbury's. This area is also home to a few students who have overflowed from the city. Framwellgate high street offers a good variety in small shops, takeaways and good pubs. Only 2.5 miles from the centre it is within easy commuting distance by bus or bike.

Newton Hall is a large housing estate served with a local library, local shops, chemist, fish 'n chips shop and a Co-Op food store. The area tends to be popular with students who are accompanied by their families. It has schools and is well served by public transport.

### **In General**

Students tend to scatter themselves almost everywhere from Belmont to Witton Gilbert. As a general rule prices tend to drop the further out you go from the city centre and often offer reduced rates over the summer vacations.

## Fixed Term Agreements

Most students will be expected to sign or agree to a fixed term tenancy. This means a period of time has been specified and agreed, for example 9, 10, or 12 months. In the majority of cases you will be liable for the rent for the whole period, whether you occupy the property or not.

The two ways you can leave a fixed term tenancy would be if your contract specified a specific clause allowing you to surrender the tenancy, after giving notice to the landlord or by mutual consent. **However** it is very unusual for contracts to contain a surrender clause. The usual way students leave a tenancy is by finding a replacement tenant, **if** this is possible. **DSU Accommodation Office or Advice Centre can check and explain your contract *before* you sign.**

## Travel Costs

Students often worry about incurring travel expenses by living further out from the city centre. However, if you are travelling by bus it is possible to purchase saver returns and bus passes which offer unlimited travel into Durham, making commuting much more economical. Bowburn has discounts on some buses for students travelling from Stockton campus to Durham campus.

## Student Night Bus

DSU runs a nightbus for students in **term time**. It runs from Gilesgate (Tesco) through the city centre, up to the Railway Station, Dryburn roundabout, past the hill colleges and up to Neville's Cross and onto Langley Moor 7pm - 3am @ 50p donation. See [nightbus.dsu.org.uk](http://nightbus.dsu.org.uk) for more information.