



House Hunting Guide



House Hunting Tips

Moving out of Halls and/or looking for your new home is an exciting time but one that needs careful consideration and planning. It is important not to rush in to anything that you later regret, after all it is a major financial commitment and you will have to literally “live with” your decision for a long time.

- Determine your budget. Be realistic and don't under estimate what you'll need to live on
- Consider very carefully who you want to live with and therefore what house size you need. This is often a lot more difficult than it might seem and remember you'll be with each other for a long time. Is everyone good friends? Are some people couples? Who is tidy who is not? Who likes to party, who likes a quieter life? Can you rely on each of them to pay their share of the bills? Can you all afford the same standard of house? etc.
- Decide who is going to be your spokesperson or 'lead tenant'. Ideally this should be someone who is a good communicator and who is easily contactable by the landlord/Agent
- Write down what your priorities are in a house: size, preferred location, cost, broadband included, room sizes, garden, garage etc.
- **There is no need to panic!** There are plenty of student houses available in York both with Sinclair Properties and with other landlords and Agents. You also have plenty of time to view several properties before making an informed decision so please don't rush into it
- **Do your research!** Use the internet; it can be a great source of information with photographs, floor plans and other useful information about the house. Consider recommendations from your University Accommodation Office and fellow students
- Register your interest only with reputable Letting Agents and landlords
- Prepare lots of questions beforehand and write them down. You can add them to the useful Checklist included within this leaflet
- **DO NOT** sign or pay anything immediately after a viewing. Some landlords/Agents apply undue pressure for you to do this
- Take time after your viewing to re-appraise whether the house meets all of your needs
- Contact the landlord or Agent again to clarify anything that is not clear
- Do not feel pressured by anyone into taking a property before you have had adequate time to consider and discuss all the pro's and con's with your housemates
- Ensure that you fully understand not only what the rental figure is, but also when and how it is to be paid
- Ensure you are aware of any other costs that may be payable to the landlord/Agent before deciding
- Finally, read the Tenancy Agreement before signing it. If you are unsure of anything contained within it, have it checked by your University Welfare Officer or a Solicitor before signing

When you have arranged a viewing appointment:

- o Take your questions, Checklist and a pen with you!
- o Turn up on time or slightly early
- o Ensure that all of your housemates turn up for the viewing, as you may not get a second chance. It is a huge commitment and you should not rely on what others say before parting with several thousand pounds in rent. The landlord/Agent will also wish to meet all of your group before offering you the house
- o Take a camera with you but please obtain the permission of the person showing you the house (and/or the existing tenants) before taking any internal photos
- o Ask lots of questions and write down the answers given along with the name of the person who gave them to you. Be suspicious of evasive replies or a reluctance to answer
- o If the existing tenants are present, ask them questions too. How have they found the house? Does everything work? What do they think of their landlord/Agent? What are the bills like? Have they enjoyed their time there?
- o Fill in the Checklist as you walk round and ask questions! It is amazing how you can easily forget something about a particular house when you are viewing several.

Good luck with your house hunting!

View our fantastic properties here

www.sinclair-properties.com

House Viewing Checklist

GENERAL

COMPARE THE PROPERTIES YOU VIEW HERE (We recommend you add a ✓ or a ✗ and/or rate your opinions from 1 to 6)

Property Address				
Date and time of Viewing				
Name of the person conducting the viewing (and who answered your questions)				
Name of landlord/Agent	Sinclair Properties			
Landlord or Agent's contact details	T: 01904 427 428 E: info@sinclair-properties.com			
Is this landlord/Agent reputable?	Award Winning Agency Trading 15 Years – The Market Leader 14 fully trained staff in 2 offices NALS Licensed Letting Agent Approved SAFE Agent Property Ombudsman Scheme Member Holding Client Monies Protection Insurance			
Who actually manages the property, the owner/ landlord, the Agent or someone else?	Sinclair Properties			
Is a full and detailed inventory provided when we move in?				

FINANCIAL

Rent per person per week	£	£	£	£	£
Is broadband included in rent?					
Is anything else included in the rent?					
Is FREE contents insurance provided by the landlord or the Agent?	✓				
How much is the Deposit per person?	£200 (for houses with 4 or more bedrooms)	£	£	£	£
Will the deposit be protected in a Government approved scheme?	✓				
Which Government approved scheme does the landlord/Agent use?	TDS & DPS				
Are there any additional charges or admin fees payable to secure the property?	✗ It's FREE with Sinclair	£	£	£	£
Energy Rating? (By law the property must have an Energy Performance Certificate, EPC)					
Tenancy start date?					

HOUSE INFORMATION

Rate the location/area				
Number of bedrooms with double beds?				
Number of bedrooms with single beds?				
Does it have a communal lounge/lounge area?	✓			
Rate the condition of house				
Rate the standard of décor				
Rate the standard of furniture				
Colour TV provided?	✓			
DVD player provided?	✓			
How many showers/bathrooms?				
How many toilets?				
Convenient for University, Town, Shops, Pub, Bus Stop, Take-Away etc?				
Is there any car parking – Free/Permit?				

SAFETY

Does house have a HMO Licence? (Only required if 5 + people on 3 + floors)	✓ YES (on all applicable houses)			
Does house have a Gas Safety Certificate (Less than 12 months old)?	✓			
Does house have an Electrical Safety Certificate (Less than 5 years old)?	✓			
Have all electrical appliances provided in the house been PAT tested within the last 24 months?	✓ YES (carried out every 12 months)			
Are smoke detectors fitted on each floor of the house?	✓			
Are fire extinguishers provided on each floor of the house?	✓			
Is there a fire blanket fitted in the kitchen?	✓			
Is a carbon monoxide detector fitted near every gas appliance?	✓			
Does the landlord/Agent regularly inspect and test the safety equipment provided?	✓ YES (carried out every 3 months)			

House Viewing Checklist Continued

SECURITY

Do you feel safe in this area?					
Are the front and rear doors fitted with secure locks?					
Is there a burglar alarm fitted?					
Is there secure cycle storage?					
Do all ground floor windows have locks fitted?					
Do you have any other security concerns?					

OTHER USEFUL INFORMATION

Garden furniture provided?	✓				
BBQ provided?	✓				
Oven?	✓				
Hob?	✓				
Fridge?	✓				
Freezer?	✓				
Microwave?	✓				
Washing machine?	✓				

QUESTIONS TO ASK EXISTING TENANTS

Why are you leaving?					
Have you enjoyed living here?					
Would you recommend the landlord/Agent?					
NOTES					

Contact Details

01904 427 428

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www.sinclair-properties.com

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