

Being a good student neighbour

1. Introduce yourself to your neighbours when you move in and establish a good relationship. Some people may find it daunting to approach neighbours they do not know well, but getting to know one another will help to develop a good relationship. That way you can get in contact with each other should any problems arise.
2. Volunteer in your local community. Whatever your interests, talents or skills may be, there are opportunities for everyone. It will impact positively on your life, as well as the lives of those you volunteer for. It offers you a chance to become involved in a project or with an organisation you really care about or develop a new skill. It's also a great opportunity to meet new people.
3. Respect your neighbours. Whether, student or non student, remember that if you are coming home late, there's a high probability you'll wake at least one house up if you are shouting down the street. Try to keep noise to minimum and don't leave litter on the streets – that's not nice for anyone. And remember, keep safe on your journey home and don't travel alone.
4. Love your home. If your landlord is responsible for the maintenance of the house, there's still no excuse! Let your landlord know if there is something that needs tending to, and keep copies of all your correspondence. You should always try to rent from an accredited landlord.
5. Register to vote. This is how you can have a say on the issues that affect your local neighbourhood, as well as who gets elected to Parliament and even to Europe. It's really important that everyone in a community engages with local decision making; if students don't vote or engage with local issues then we don't get listened to.
6. Get involved. Make sure you're signed up to hear about community events – be it a forum, a fete, a protest, or a jumble sale. These are all excellent ways to get to know the members of your community, and really start to feel at home.
7. Keep it locked. Remember to lock your windows and doors. No-one wants to get burgled, or live next door to somewhere that keeps getting broken into. It's upsetting, it'll make your insurance go through the roof and everyone feel unsafe. A quarter of all burglaries happen through unlocked windows and doors - which may have been avoided.
8. Keep your neighbours in the loop. Be sure to let your neighbours know if your house is going to be empty for a considerable period – whether this is you going on holiday, on a placement or on a study

break. This means they can keep an eye out for anything suspicious and that they know they are next to an empty property.

9. Party monster? If you are planning to have a few people over, do tell your neighbours. Having the occasional party is everyone's prerogative. If you decide to hold one, hold it at the weekend or at a time agreed with your neighbours. Tell your neighbours about the party, keep the noise to a reasonable level, and agree a time to end it by. Make sure your friends leave quietly and you clear up any debris.

10. Find out when the bin day is. It's the local authority's responsibility to provide a waste collection service, but as residents we all need to make sure that we help it run effectively. This is by far the issue that we hear up and down the country that irks residents the most. No-one wants a street with rows of overflowing bins. If there's a problem with your waste collection, let your students' union and local authority know!

11. Plan your exit. It's important to think about how you're going to leave your house when your contract ends. This may seem like a long way in the future, but this can be one of the most stressful periods of your year. Make sure you plan ahead and leave the accommodation in a good condition for the next tenants. There may also be special refuse collection or recycling services put on to assist in these periods when lots of students may be moving to a different house. Check with your local authority or students' union for more information.