

Living in the community

Home Safety & Security

It is important to prioritise safety now that you are living in your house. Student properties are especially vulnerable as there are usually a number of tenants sharing responsibilities and a higher than usual number of items which are attractive to burglars (eg numerous phones, laptops). Therefore you need to maintain some basic safety standards:

- Always make sure you shut your windows if you are not in a room, and always keep your front door locked. Most burglaries on student properties occur through unforced entry. Don't make it easy!
- Do not leave valuables in easy view, such as laptops and ipods on window sills.
- When you purchase new items (e.g. laptops) don't advertise it to burglars by leaving the packaging outside.
- Get home contents insurance. This will enable you to recover the costs of anything lost if you are a victim of burglary, and sometimes insurance will cover damage caused by accident.
- Give the impression that someone is in the house, even when you are out, for example leave a light on, or use a timer switch to put a light or radio on at different times of the day. You can get timer switches from the **Community Wardens** (<http://www.guildofstudents.com/ilovesellyoak>).
- **Selly Watch** (<http://www.guildofstudents.com/sellywatch>) helps keep you one step ahead of a burglar, by letting you know what's happening in your area.
- Take valuables home during the holidays.
- You should make yourself aware of fire escape routes, fire extinguishers and fire blankets. Fires spread quickly!
- Do not leave your cooking unattended and make sure you turn all appliances off when not in use. Remember never to cook when you have been drinking or are feeling sleepy.
- If a fire does start evacuate immediately and call 999 as soon as possible.

General Safety, Security & Advice

- If you are bringing your car to university, be sure to lock it and do not leave any valuables visible. This includes sat navs and leaving glove boxes open to confirm there is nothing valuable in it. Try to park in a well lit area and when moving between your car and house remember to lock it, especially when unloading and loading at the start or end of term - criminals work quickly!
- If you have a bicycle, always remember to lock it. Discounted D-Locks can be purchased from campus police for £10 (based in the University Centre).

Rubbish & Recycling

Bin days across Birmingham vary. To find out what day your household rubbish bins are see the **Birmingham City Council refuse collection page** (<http://www.birmingham.gov.uk/refusecollection>). Bin bags should not be put out before 6pm the night before and must be out before 6am in order to be collected. You are responsible for the disposal of your rubbish!

Some areas are provided with recycling facilities and Birmingham City Council currently offer: -

- Blue Box – paper and card
- Green Box – Glass bottles and jars, cans and plastic bottles
- Clear / Green bags – Garden Waste

Collections are generally every two weeks, alternating between recycling and garden waste.

Wheelie Bins

The University recently launched a 'wheelie bin' scheme in conjunction with the City Council. The University purchased a large number of wheelie bins for a number of roads in the Bournbrook area of Selly Oak, with the hope of keeping the streets cleaner and tidier.

If you live in a wheelie bin road, all you need to do is fill your wheelie bin each week, and the refuse collectors will do the rest. Streets with wheelie bins do not have 'Green box' collections and residents in these streets will need to recycle waste using the on street collection banks. Paper is collected as described above.

Birmingham City Council will also arrange collection of large items / bulky waste by prior arrangement: see the **City Council bulk waste collection page** (<http://www.birmingham.gov.uk/bulkywaste>) for further information or contact them directly of 0121 303 1112. You are entitled to 1 free collection per year of up to 6 items.

Community Advice

Living can assist with advice and guidance on your tenancy, from deposit queries, problems with landlords or any other matter. Please do not hesitate to **contact us** ([/undergraduate/accommodation/Contactus.aspx](http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/undergraduate/accommodation/Contactus.aspx)) about any matter.