



The  
University  
Of  
Sheffield.

Accommodation &  
Campus  
Services.

## Intro Weekend 2009

Intro Weekend is the two-day period every year when we welcome new students into University accommodation. This year around 6,000 new students will arrive to take up their University accommodation over Saturday 19 and Sunday 20 September. As always, this is a well-managed and carefully planned process of which Accommodation and Campus Services (ACS) has expertise over many years.

Our experience from last year has resulted in the introduction of several changes to the process, and ACS has worked with partners across the University and the city, including local police and transport authorities, to improve the operation of the weekend and the welcome students receive, and to ensure minimum disruption to Sheffield.

### Key collection

Students collect their keys from a range of locations close to their accommodation. For 2009 a number of changes have been made to the key collection process to improve the experience.

### Contract start date

In previous years the majority of students' contracts began on the Saturday of Intro Weekend and they were able to collect their keys on either Saturday or Sunday. Most chose to arrive on the Saturday, particularly during the hours of 1-4pm.

This year contracts for accommodation have been split, with some commencing on Saturday and others on Sunday in order to distribute arrivals more evenly across the two days. This split means that approximately students will arrive each day.

In addition, a new online e-induction system allows students to select an arrival time slot, which will also help to distribute arrivals throughout each day and limit arrivals at peak periods. The slots are in one hour periods with a pre-determined number of arrivals permitted per slot; once the limit is reached no further arrivals will be allowed at that time. Demand for time slots is being monitored up until Intro Weekend to adapt the numbers if necessary. Other universities have successfully used this system.

### Key collection points

The number of key collection points has been increased from last year to help better disperse traffic. There are two points in The Endcliffe Village at Stephenson and The Edge, The Ridge in The Ranmoor Village, Tupton Hall, University House and Opal 2, which is located near to the Brook Hill Roundabout.

### Opening hours

The period that keys can be collected has been extended from previous years when the collection points were open between 10am and 6pm. For 2009, the majority of key collection points will be open between 8am and 10pm.

## Out of hours arrivals

A process is in place for students arriving out of hours. Often this can be EU and International students with flights arriving late at night. After 10pm students for The Endcliffe Village should go to The Edge, for The Ranmoor Village to The Ridge, for Opal 2 to Customer Reception and for other city accommodation to Firth Court.

## **Traffic and parking**

Volume and flow of traffic and adequate parking space were problems in 2008, particularly in The Endcliffe Village where the success of the welcome activities and the warm weather resulted in parents and family staying to enjoy the atmosphere.

In addition to managing the flow of arrivals through the changes to key collection, a number of improvements to the traffic and parking plans have been introduced for 2009.

## Traffic plan

A more thorough transport and traffic plan has been agreed in collaboration with Sheffield City Council. The planned football match between Sheffield United and Sheffield Wednesday was successfully moved from Saturday 19 September after feedback from both universities in the city.

The traffic plan involves signage from the M1 to direct exit at Junction 33 along the Sheffield Parkway following the Ring Road, up Broad Lane past the University and on through Broomhill via Fulwood Road.

For The Endcliffe Village, cars will be directed to come down either Ashdell Road or Endcliffe Crescent, depending on their accommodation location. Once unloaded cars will be asked to leave the village via the exit onto Endcliffe Vale Road and then to Clarkehouse Road. For The Ranmoor Village, traffic will access from Fulwood Road and exit onto Shore Lane and back along Fulwood Road.

Traffic marshals will be positioned at various locations to assist with directions and parking, and monitor traffic flow and volumes.

Information about a closure on the M1 between junctions 25 and 26 from 9pm on Saturday 19 and 9am on Sunday 20 September has been prominently displayed on the accommodation website to forewarn early arrivals from the South.

## Parking

Arrivals will be encouraged to park close to their accommodation and then walk to their key collection point to avoid excess journeys between locations. They will be given a time limit to unload belongings; this will generally be one hour, however this will be monitored and reviewed if necessary over the course of each day. After unloading cars will be moved to car parks further away from the accommodation to allow for new arrivals.

Local schools have kindly offered their grounds for additional parking over the weekend. In addition, parents will be encouraged to attend Parents Drop-in Sessions on main campus with appropriate University car parks being made available.

For the City Centre locations arrivals will pick up their keys from University House and park in the University's Durham Road car park before proceeding to their specified accommodation.

## Management and staffing

There are clearly defined roles and responsibilities for staff over Intro Weekend using a combination of ACS staff, students, Students' Union Sabbatical Officers, volunteers from within the University and representatives from last year's Community Development Committees.

A Duty Manager from the ACS senior management team will manage the activity in and around the Student Villages, being the main point of contact with responsibility for the overall operation, for example for decision-making and the escalation of problems, should the need arise.

All staff will be clearly identifiable to new arrivals and visitors. ACS staff on normal duty will wear their designated uniforms and staff working specially over Intro Weekend will wear t-shirts to identify their specific role over the weekend. Those wearing green t-shirts are key issue or help and assistance staff whilst those in pink t-shirts are meet and greet and luggage assistance staff. All staff will have received appropriate training and a full briefing prior to Intro Weekend.

## The Ranmoor Village

The final phase of the new development of student accommodation in the University's Student Residences Strategy will be complete for students arriving over Intro Weekend, with handover of the new buildings having taken place on 11 September.

The Ranmoor Village provides ACS with over 1,100 brand new student bedrooms, with 1,071 en-suite bedrooms in self-contained apartments, 18 studios and 72 family apartments. The Ridge provides the central facilities for the village, including a bar serving meals, Customer Services, a launderette and meeting rooms that will also be used for conferences.

The accommodation is of the same high standard as the new apartments in The Endcliffe Village, which have already received excellent ratings for student satisfaction. There remains some outstanding landscaping and groundwork to the outside of the apartments, which students who will be living there have been made aware of in advance.

## Welcome

Creating a warm welcome to new students is very important and the activities last year at The Endcliffe Village proved to be extremely successful in giving the great first impression of the University. Building on this experience, a more consistent welcome approach will be implemented across the different key collection locations. The welcome activities have been improved even further and will include Student Services information stall, the sale of essential items and eatwithUS cards, ACS Here to Help stall, Resident Support stall, Communities stall and refreshments.

In addition, there is a organised programme of events and activities to help students settle-in, meet new friends and take part in new experiences during their first few weeks. Many of the activities have been planned through the Communities Team, which is a joint partnership between ACS and the Students' Union. New student residents will be given the opportunity to help propose and organise activities by becoming members of their Community Development Committee or by being Block Freps. For more information visit [www. www.sheffield.ac.uk/union/activities-and-sport/communities/](http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/union/activities-and-sport/communities/)

## Communication

Communication prior to, and during, Intro Weekend is essential to its success and we have implemented a range of planned communications over the last few months to ensure everyone involved has an understanding of what will be happening.

### Students and their families

The accommodation website at [www.sheffield.ac.uk/accommodation](http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/accommodation) has a dedicated section for students arriving in September with comprehensive information, including what to expect, what to bring, key collection, travel and directions, information about activities and events and a reminder to use the online e-induction and book an arrival time slot.

A pre-arrival mailing was sent out on Friday 4 September to all UK residents to remind students about important arrival information. The mailing also included a copy of the new residences magazine, Digs, an online copy of which can be found at [www.sheffield.ac.uk/accommodation/arriving09](http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/accommodation/arriving09). EU and International students were sent an email with the same information and a link to the online magazine.

When collecting keys, students will also be given information including their inventory, security and safety information and a map of the residences.

During the first four weeks of term the Resident Support team in ACS will hold Block Receptions to welcome and meet their students and visit all flats for a Flat Meeting to go through important welfare and discipline topics including the House Rules, advice on living together, the 'Staying up? Keep it down' campaign about noise, the crime reduction campaign, being part of a community and meningitis information.

### University Staff

ACS continues to work with colleagues across the University and the Students' Union regarding Intro Weekend. Operational plans have been shared with appropriate teams to ensure there is a consistent knowledge of what's happening in the residences and can provide good customer service in all areas.

### Local residents

An event was held on Thursday 3 September to inform local residents about the plans for Intro Weekend. In addition, this briefing note will be distributed to immediate neighbours to the Student Villages and to relevant local resident groups, as well as being available on the University website at [www.sheffield.ac.uk/communityrelations/accommodation.html](http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/communityrelations/accommodation.html)

### **Feedback and comments**

In order to continue to improve, ACS welcomes feedback and comments about Intro Weekend. If you have any feedback about the plans outlined in this briefing note, the operation of the weekend itself, or the communication process, please contact ACS Customer Services by email at [acs-customerservices@sheffield.ac.uk](mailto:acs-customerservices@sheffield.ac.uk).

Everyone in ACS is looking forward to the arrival of new students and a successful Intro Weekend.