

THE PROPERTY MARKETING STRATEGISTS, TOGETHER WITH LEADING ON-CAMPUS STUDENT ACCOMMODATION PROVIDER UPP, HAVE UNDERTAKEN ONE OF THE LARGEST INDEPENDENT STUDENT ACCOMMODATION RESEARCH SURVEYS.

For details on the methodology [click here](#)

COMMUNITY

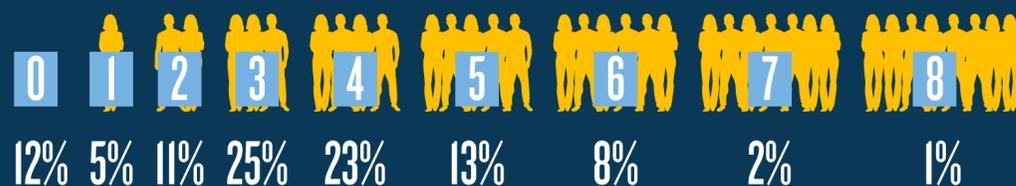
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GEN Z PRIORITISES COMMUNITY AND WANTS TO ENGAGE BEYOND THEIR EDUCATION SETTING.

SHARED LIVING

HOW MANY PEOPLE DO CUSTOMERS WANT TO LIVE WITH?



Interestingly, UK and overseas undergraduates both prefer living with **3 - 4 flatmates**. As a vast comparison, a quarter of all graduates surveyed said they would prefer to share with **1 or live alone** - a number which was preferred by just **18% of current students**.

Delving deeper into the concept of shared living, respondents were asked which aspect of home life would be better when living alone or sharing with others. Activities such as cooking and cleaning scored high for living alone (**60.5% and 60.5% of all current students**), compared to paying bills and eating (**25.6% and 35%**). These results differed amongst graduates, of whom **45%** said they preferred to share cleaning activities with others.

Communal areas for eating could perhaps better support the wellbeing and integration of sharing tenants, whereas shared bill packages enable students to manage their finances and tackle affordability issues better. So this is not surprising. Our focus group revealed that the challenge around cooking together is conflict around mess so perhaps this one can be overcome with better storage, consideration around allocations and generally more positive guidance around communal living.

The survey went on to further reveal that amongst current students, when asked where they wish to live after graduating, **41% of UK students and 54% of overseas students** responded with 'wherever is best for my career' as opposed to where their family and friends reside. The majority response was varied among graduates. **39% answering 'where my family are'**, and **38% answering 'wherever is best for my career'**.

This perhaps reiterates the transient nature of students, and that they are willing to move further afield to support their career ambitions. But the feeling of community can be heightened by having family nearby for graduates. Is there more we can do here to promote a greater sense of community?

THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

When asked which activities made them feel a part of their local community, 57% of current UK students, and 64% of overseas students said **using independent shops and restaurants** (compared with chains). There was also a positive response towards being a **part of a local, non-student club or team**, of which 27% of students said this helped them feel connected to their community.



"THERE IS A TENDENCY IN BIGGER CITIES TO GET LOST IN EVERYTHING AND FEEL QUITE DISCONNECTED."

We also asked future students which activities would make them feel a part of a new community after they left home. Shopping at independent stores and restaurants again, scored highly, with 52% of UK students, and 42% of overseas students. **Working or volunteering locally** also elicited a positive response from future students at 38%.

When asked about study habits, local coffee shops scored surprisingly well amongst current students, with 24% selecting this as a preferred study environment. This hints at the potential for study and learning to extend beyond the building and university campus more in the future.

The 'town and gown' debate is an old one but through our research we can clearly see a **desire for students to integrate much more in the local community** than may have previously been assumed. Could this work the other way with the community being invited to utilise communal facilities at underutilised times and to tap into entrepreneurs and small businesses?

LIVING & LEARNING:
THE FUTURE OF HOME ACCORDING TO GEN Z

Analysed by Dataloft

Developed in partnership between



ONLINE LEARNING



If due to online lectures, you were only required to attend university in person once per week, would this reduce or increase your desire to live in student accommodation?

Interestingly, of current overseas students surveyed, 43% said **this would neither increase or reduce** their desire.

This further reinforces the emphasis on community. Student accommodation providers will need to **focus their messaging** beyond just the building or university and focus **on the wider city** to encourage students to move closer to their studies and enjoy the community aspects of shared living. Equally it highlights how the accommodation sector is beholden to their university partners and therefore **communication and collaboration is key**.

FUTURE STUDENTS

58% REDUCE
7% INCREASE
35% NO CHANGE

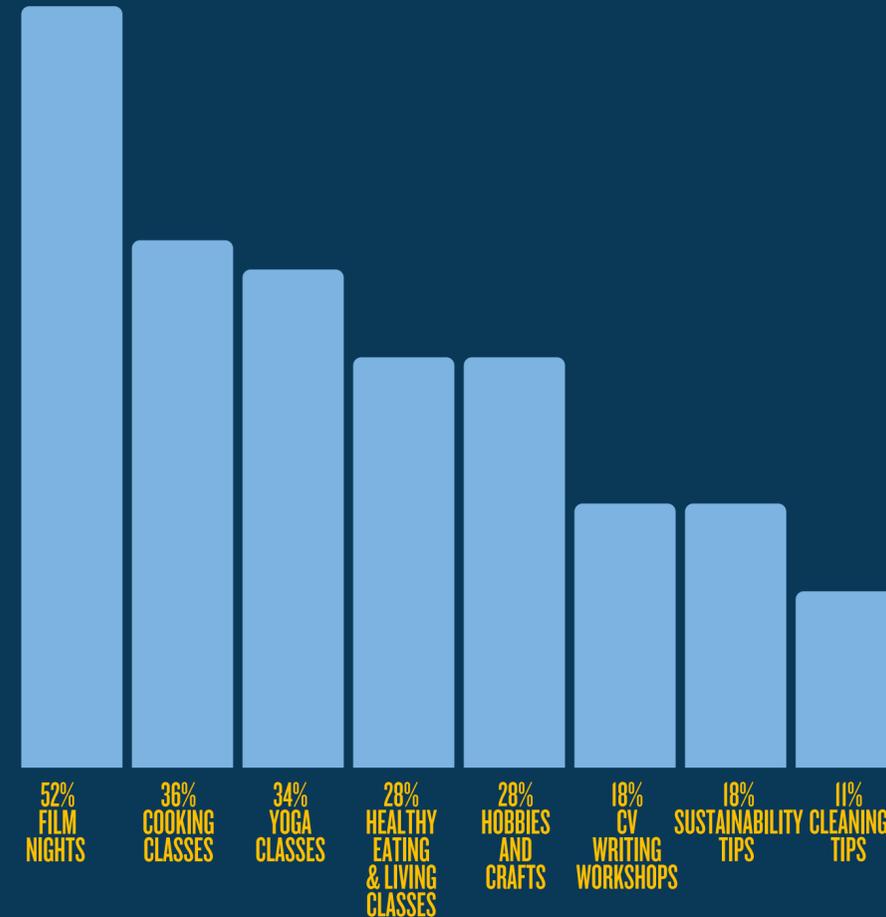


LUIZA

“EVERYTHING FOR ME HAS BEEN ONLINE. IT’S BEEN PRETTY LONELY. MY COMMUNITY IS PEOPLE I LIVE WITH IN STUDENT ACCOMMODATION.”

ORGANISED EVENTS

If your landlord or local community organised the following events, which would you be more likely to attend?



Here we can see there is a clear preference towards non-academic activities. Students arguably turn to organised events as a route of escapism, perhaps to support mental, social and physical wellbeing. Interestingly, most of the positive responses were around personal development which raises the questions of how far a landlord should go to influence their customers.

WHAT THIS MEANS FOR THE FUTURE...

The relationship between student accommodation, the university experience, and the local community is one that is **growing stronger with the influx of Gen Z**, and perhaps even the aftershocks of the pandemic. **The local community has never been more valuable**, helping us all through one of the most isolating times. Being away from family, familiarity and home comforts can put a strain on mental and social wellbeing. But **feeling a part of the local community can contribute to that feeling of ‘home’**, supporting students to feel settled and safe in their location.

Accommodation providers need to **take note of the additional activities that are favoured** by students, such as shopping at local restaurants and shops, studying in local coffee shops, and volunteering locally. If partnerships can be established with the local community, this can help providers to **broaden their packages to integrate community matters and initiatives that naturally weave a connection to the locality into their accommodation**.

KEEP AHEAD OF THE CURVE

Over the course of the next 6 months The Property Marketing Strategists and UPP will be releasing a series of reports and webinars focused on the key themes of Sustainability, Affordability, Technology, Wellbeing and Community to share the fascinating insight gained from this in-depth research. This will lead up to the final report being issued at the end of the year.

If you want to stay up to date with what Gen Z want from their future home, please **sign up** to the insight alerts, follow us on our social channels and **book a space on our webinars**.

Together we can build a property sector that exceeds the expectations of the next generation.



PropertyMarketingStrategists.co.uk