

Student Management Plan – Cúirt na Coiribe, Headford Road, Galway





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Introduction

This Student Management Plan submitted by Exeter Ireland Property III Ltd addresses the management processes and policies that will be put in place to enable the effective administration and supervision of the proposed upgraded accommodation at Cúirt na Coiribe. This has been prepared as part of the planning application for the redevelopment of Cúirt na Coiribe, Headford Road, Galway.

Cúirt na Coiribe opened its doors in September 2004 for its first intake of NUI Galway residents, and since then, there has been a continuing and growing demand for student accommodation in Galway. We are planning to meet that demand by expanding the accommodation and continuing to manage it with our residence-based staff, complemented by local partner companies, providing security and onsite support services.

In terms of how things stand at the moment, we both own and manage the student and short let accommodation at this large site of approximately 1.2 hectares, comprising 6 four-storey blocks (plus attic accommodation) and a two-storey service building, providing 405 bed spaces. The Residence also has a secure basement level car park with capacity for 135 cars. We have approximately 200 secure bike parking spaces and an additional 30 car park spaces at ground level.

This Management Plan lays out the principles and practices governing the management of the student accommodation and summer time short let accommodation. It has also been drawn up with a view to identifying and neutralising any possible negative impact of the development on the neighbouring community, and on being a good neighbour and positive asset in the neighbourhood. We believe a well-managed accommodation facility should integrate with the local community and add to it economically and socially.

Exeter has extensive experience to build upon in managing this Residence. We have met and managed all of the issues involved in providing a top class residential experience for students. We have successfully provided the right combination of private study space and well-designed communal space and we have proved ourselves to be a considerate neighbour. Our expanded accommodation plan is designed, in both its layout and its operational features, to build upon this foundation.

This document lays out the well-developed operational practices that have provided, and will continue to provide, a safe, positive, comfortable and productive environment for our residents.

Mission Statement

Cúirt na Coiribe will be a safe, clean, well managed residence, where residents will be provided with comfortable private accommodation that facilitates study, rest and regeneration, and ample communal space to facilitate positive interaction, friendship and mutual support. It also provides a range of services to assist everyday living, all within an actively managed secure space.

We believe a clean and well-designed communal environment is a prerequisite to a peaceful productive stay, allowing residents to focus entirely on their studies and the necessary rest and recreation.

The management will aim to ensure, in co-operation with college pastoral services, that each student receives all the care and support they might need in adapting to the new realities of their lives as self-managed adults.

The Residence's comprehensive security programme will respect the need for individual privacy, while availing of the benefits of technological monitoring, with the aim of providing a safe environment for our students and short stay residents.

Cúirt na Coiribe acknowledges and respects the right of local residents and businesses to a quiet life and will work to ensure that these rights are not compromised. Our staff will adhere to a Good Neighbour Policy which seeks to collaborate closely with local residents and businesses. Our aim is to encourage a safe and caring environment for staff and residents that works in harmony with the local community.



Our 24/7 Residence

Active 24/7 Management

Cúirt na Coiribe will be actively managed 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and specific coverage levels can be increased as required to anticipate fluctuating service requirements through the year. The Cúirt na Coiribe in-house Accommodation Management Team, employed directly by Exeter, will be comprised of an Accommodation Manager supervising full-time Housekeeping and Maintenance Teams and part-time staff. In addition, contracted operatives will be available to provide ancillary support at times of peak or seasonal demand.

The Accommodation Manager will ensure:

- that staff are aware of their obligations to residents, guests and the local community and that they will be required to conduct themselves professionally at all times.
- that contracted service providers or suppliers are reputable, fully qualified and adequately insured; and that they will act in a professional and courteous manner whilst at Cúirt na Coiribe.
- that lost key fobs or other access tools are replaced as soon as possible after notification and in accordance with the license governing occupation; and that all lost fobs/other access tools are cancelled immediately on notification to minimise the risk of being used by non-residents.

- that all residents are provided with a statement of what Cúirt na Coiribe will provide for them and what is expected of them.

Out of Hours Team

A key part of our policy of ensuring the comfort and security of our residents centres around providing a comprehensive Out of Hours service. Out of Hours periods will be covered by our Residence Team supplemented by third-party security contractors working on a weekly rota basis, therefore ensuring 24-hour coverage by either Exeter staff or directly contracted staff.

For example, the Out of Hours Team will be available to assist residents who have misplaced their fobs and allow entry to the property and/or their room upon satisfactory identification documentation being provided.

The out of Hours Team will be easily contactable during their shift and will be available to respond to callouts swiftly. Should an issue arise that is outside of their remit then the issue will be escalated to the appropriate Management Team member and/or designated third-party contractor for resolution.

We have found this Out of Hours system to be very successful and popular with residents and their parents as it provides a welcome sense of safety and security round the clock.

Security

In the interests of providing a safe environment for the student residents and of the security of their rooms in Cúirt na Coiribe, Exeter will install and manage a comprehensive security protocol involving state of the art CCTV, supplementing continuous personal oversight and robust procedures. In addition to the 24-hour security coverage, Exeter will employ the following measures to ensure the safety of the residents at all times:

Registration Process

Fundamental to security is ensuring that all residents are validated in terms of their purpose and identity. As part of the registration process, all residents who book accommodation at Cúirt na Coiribe are required to complete an online 'Application for Accommodation' in which the applicant must show that he or she will be attending a specified university or college in Galway. They will be asked to supply specific information including details of their registered place of study, which includes verifiable evidence of their registration including their issued reference number, their course and year.

At this point we collect information on any disability that may affect their accommodation requirements. Arrangements to facilitate their needs are set in motion at this time.

This confidential information will be held by Exeter in accordance with the implemented European data protection legal framework – The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) for the duration of the residents stay.

Electronic Access Control

Access to and within the Residence will be enabled via a fob/digital mobile key security system. This allows controlled access to particular rooms or common areas. Residents will be issued with a personal electronic key fob when they first arrive, and these fobs are all individually registered and subject to strict controls. They can be cancelled in the event of loss or theft and a replacement can be issued.

As an added convenience, residents may also download a unique digital key to their registered mobile phone which will enable them to access the property and also enable them to access their allocated apartment/room.

The access permissions of the fob/digital mobile key security system can be tailored by designated members of staff for specific groups of residents, under group lettings to institutions or language schools for instance, to encourage interaction and assist the development of a richer sense of community.

CCTV

Cúirt na Coiribe is equipped with a comprehensive CCTV installation. As a security tool it acts to discourage potential antisocial behavior while minimising personal intrusion. The CCTV installation is no way a replacement for the on-site staff presence, which is active 24/7, with access to this feed as part of a range of dedicated inputs including key fob usage, a dedicated 24-hour helpline and alarm sensors. Recorded video streams are stored securely by Exeter.

Operations

Exeter Ireland Operations

Exeter has developed a set of Standard Operational Procedures (SOPs) covering all issues related to the management of the Residence. The documentation provides clarity and consistency for our teams, ensuring that our residents have a consistent, positive and safe experience during their stay.

Exeter has also implemented online systems, configured around the personal details of the residents, entered during the registration process and noting any requirements they might have. The online systems integrate this data with our maintenance schedules to help manage the day-to-day running of the Residence.

Within this framework our Team will use a system of room allocation procedures to assign rooms to residents that will best suit their individual needs. For example, disabled residents will be assigned appropriately fitted DAC rooms, first year residents can be grouped to encourage integration and postgraduates can be grouped to ensure quieter living spaces that facilitate study.

The SOPs also integrate with instructions concerning Health & Safety and emergency procedures, covered later.



Transportation Policy

Cúirt na Coiribe is situated 1km from the mid-point of the NUI Galway campus and the journey is easily traversed on foot or by bicycle. According to the NUI Galway Travel Insights survey, 60% of NUI Galway residents travel to college on foot (includes 13% using public transport), 12% cycle and 28% arrive by car, either driving or as a passenger. These are overall figures, and if we eliminate the 35% of car users who said they had no other option (distance from lodging, access to alternatives), the figures from Cúirt na Coiribe, which is very close to the NUI Galway campus and has therefore little incentive for residents to travel by car, will show a low car usage rate. Many of these residents at the residence who possess cars will only use them for longer journeys.

The NUI Galway Travel Plan aims to encourage sustainable travel. Cúirt na Coiribe residents belong to the 21% of NUI Galway residents who live 1km or less from the campus, so sustainable travel goals are very achievable. The numbers for this sector of residents show 3% car usage, 3% bus, 13% cycle and 82% walking.

Cars and Car Parking

While we actively encourage sustainable transport options, we will facilitate residents who own a car by providing 43 secure basement car park spaces and 16 spaces at surface. The generous communal areas and entrances to the expanded development will facilitate the arrival by car, taxi and bus of groups of incoming residents.

Modes of Transport

Walking, the Preferred Mode

The NUI Galway Travel Plan promotes walking to and from college because it is the most sustainable mode of transport and also for its health-giving benefits. Exeter is fully in agreement with this stance. Happily, Cúirt na Coiribe is well placed in terms of geography to promote this approach.

Cycling, the Convenient Mode

We will provide 656 secure bicycle parking spaces in Cúirt na Coiribe and we will also make hi-vis vests available to our residents to avail of them, with the aim of encouraging safe and enjoyable cycling around Galway. Galway City Council is currently implementing a large programme of bicycle parking spaces in the city, which, together with a wider network of bicycle routes, forms part of the new Galway Transport Strategy. In addition, the Coca-Cola sponsored Bike Share scheme is proving very popular.

Car Issues

Parking spaces are in short supply on the NUI Galway campus, with subsequent overflow on streets to the west of the campus, so encouraging less car use is desirable. However, Cúirt na Coiribe does provide spaces for residents with cars.

Public Transport

The number 407 bus stops at Cúirt na Coiribe. It is convenient for travel into the City Centre. The frequency of service is approximately 30 minutes and the journey to the city centre, (Eyre Square) only takes about 5 minutes.

Modes of Transport (cont.)

Pedestrian Route to the Campus

The distance is 1km. The route from Cúirt na Coiribe to the campus is directly across the Quincentenary (Quin) Bridge Upper, a well-lit open route. See the map below.

Cycle route to the campus

From Cúirt na Coiribe the route follows the quiet Dun na Coiribe residential street, followed by dedicated raised bicycle lanes along the N6/R338, crossing the Quin Bridge.

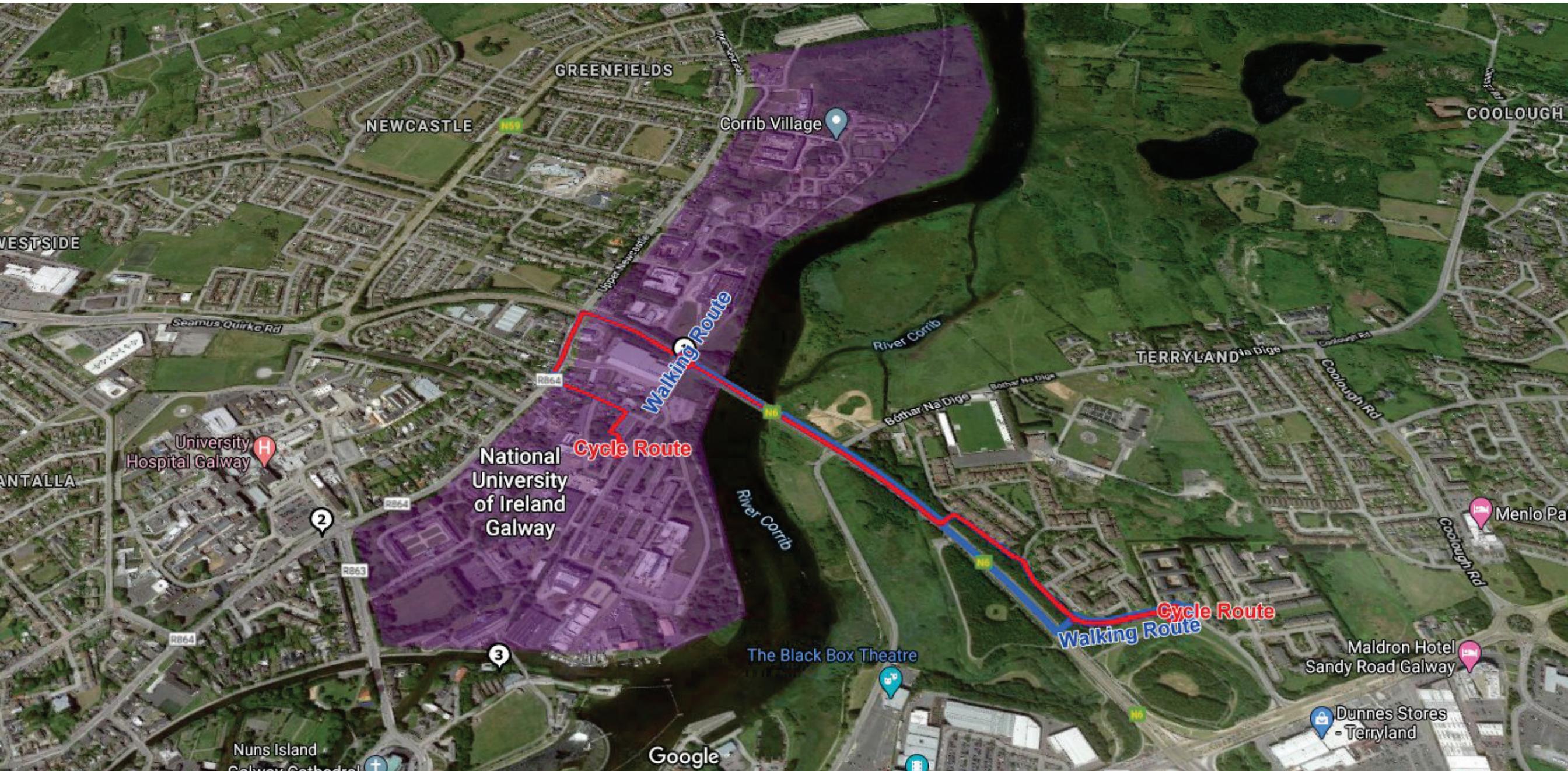


Image : Google Maps

Website

Our website is designed to provide a wealth of information about how the Residence operates, and procedural information on topics such as moving in and what actions to be taken in a range of situations.

It also hosts the Application Form, which is the basis of the Standard Operational Procedures overseeing all aspects of life in the Residence.

It provides information on what the residents need to bring with them, full contact information for the On-site Residence Team, details of room maintenance, cleaning, inspections, procedures relating to damage, health and safety, including fire safety.

There are instructions on how the room equipment – oven, extraction, etc., operates. Advice on cleaning and routine maintenance is provided.

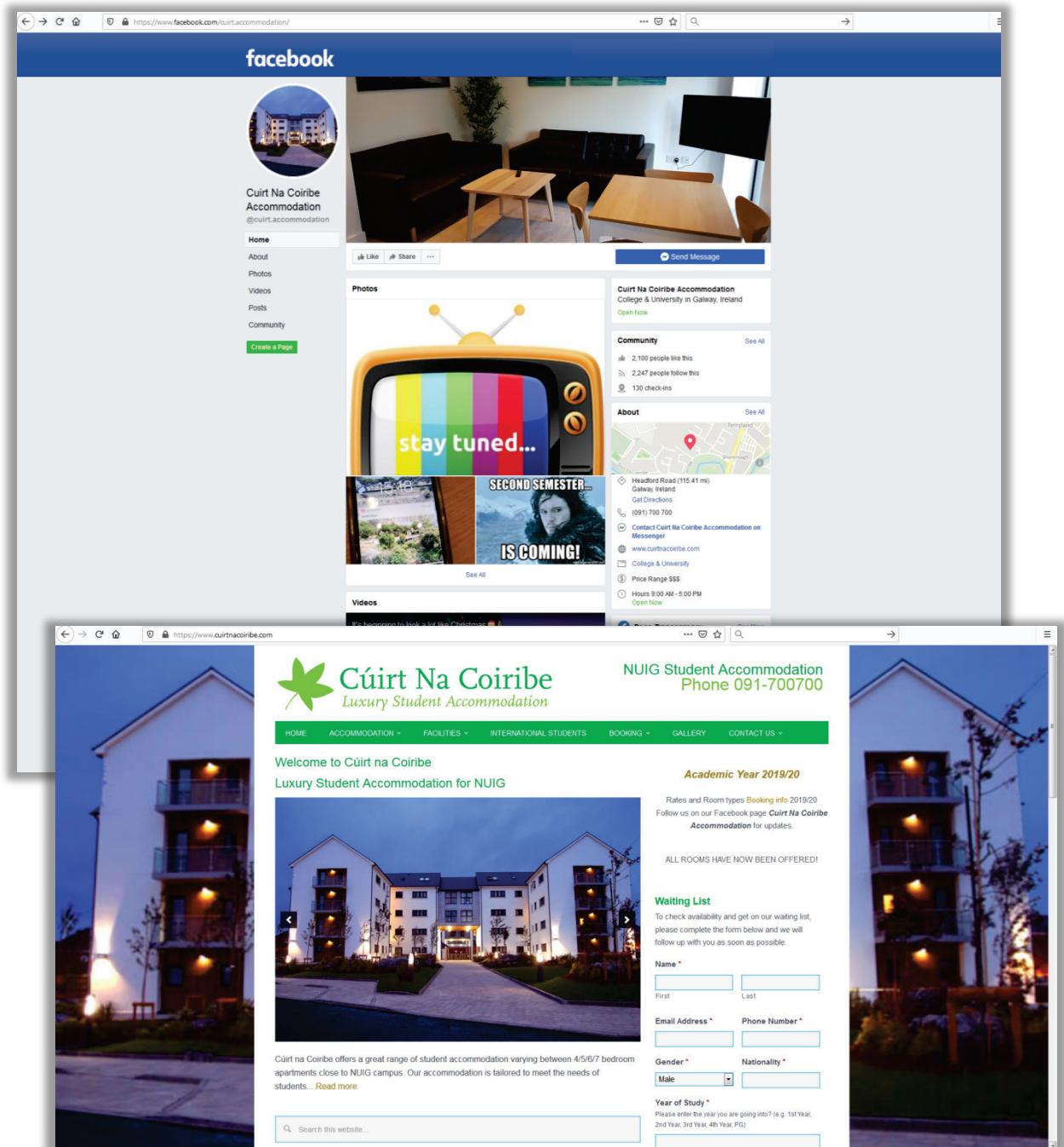
There is a guide to the immediate locality included, with a lot of useful information including details of transport, public services, shops, coffee shops, etc.

Pre-move-in

While using the website to complete their Application for Accommodation form, residents will be provided with detailed information and advice about their stay, which they and their parents can study.

Social Media

Online social media communities, public and private, are a boon to emotional well-being, so the Cúirt na Coiribe website actively facilitates them, with the goal of developing an active communal life and encouraging a variety of social groups. We see these as the lifeblood of student life and the key to an enjoyable and productive stay.



Move-in Strategy

Each student, having completed their Application for Accommodation form, will await notification of their room allocation. We will determine where they should be allocated and notify them well in advance, allowing them to complete all the arrangements for their move-in. They will be supplied with a list of what they will need to bring and they will be allocated a day and a time for arrival.

Arrival times will be staggered to allow Exeter Residence Staff ample time to welcome and process each new arrival, supply them with their key fobs and welcome pack, direct them to their rooms and troubleshoot any problems. For this reason, extra staff will be on hand for moving-in days.

Academic course start dates will vary, so with planning, bottlenecks can be avoided. A special situation arises for foreign residents who might have limited control over their arrival time and even date. Keeping lines of communication open will allow residence staff to manage their arrival.



Settling In

After the move-ins are completed, residents will be invited to a series of Welcoming Events in the communal areas, where the new arrivals can receive information and seek answers to issues relating to their new home away from home. These events will help the new arrivals meet their fellow residents and facilitate getting to know the members of the Residence Staff.

An element of the Welcoming Events is learning what is and is not acceptable behaviour within the residence. Clear boundaries from the beginning are a help in discouraging possible antisocial behaviour. In the context of our Good Neighbours policy, we will explain the rights and expectations of our neighbours.

There will be opportunities to attend talks by either local Gardai or Security Professionals about issues such as personal safety, including a presentation by the Fire Brigade on preventing fire risks. Members of the local residents Committees will be able to offer local know-how and establish lines of communication, counteracting an “us and them” mindset.

Technical staff from the Residence’s Internet Service Provider will be available to provide technical support, discuss internet access, passwords and to troubleshoot connectivity issues.

All essential elements of this information, which will include tips on energy saving, will be provided in the Welcome Guide supplied during move-in.

During residents’ Stay

Once moved in, residents will be able to contact the Exeter On-site Team in person or through an on-line portal, allowing them to manage all aspects of their stay and communicate concerns relating to maintenance and security. A dedicated email in-box is available for residents to reach out for support if needed.

Exeter’s Systems prioritise keeping open lines of communication, allowing any problems that may arise to be dealt with in a timely manner to ensure a safe, comfortable stay.

Room Inspections

In the interests of ensuring that the residence is well maintained, room inspections will be scheduled on a regular basis, usually one inspection per term, unless a previous inspection has raised an issue that requires more frequent attention.

The timing of room inspections will be given at least 24 hours in advance, in order to minimise the resident’s inconvenience and disruption, and residents may opt to be present during an inspection.

Maintenance Issues

There is an On-site Maintenance Team tasked with general upkeep and internal and external repairs. They follow a programme of Preventative Maintenance, designed to keep repair issues to a minimum. They are available in case of any difficulty with the services in the rooms.

During residents' Stay (cont.)

Where an issue arises, the Maintenance Team will follow an Exeter online logging and scheduling procedure, the repairs being assigned speedily and according to urgency. Residents will have the option of remaining while the repairs are completed. Information relating to the progress of the repair will be updated online and available for inspection and a calling card will be left

Work will be carried out between the hours of 9am and 6pm weekdays, and where possible, in the off-peak hours between 10am and 4pm. Of course, in an emergency work must be carried out whenever it arises.

Grounds Maintenance

Our outdoor spaces are there for the enjoyment of all, and they will be maintained in good order on a daily basis by the on-site Maintenance Team and external contractors, who will keep the spaces clean and undertake various gardening tasks.

Summer Stays Strategy

In addition to Exeter's core business of providing student accommodation during the academic year, we will also supply short stay accommodation, servicing the seasonal tourist market in Galway.

Summer tourist accommodation requires a different set of procedures on the part of the in-house Residence Team, to enable processing of frequent check-ins and check-outs, in contrast to the routine structure of the academic year.

In addition to increased daytime coverage during this period, undertaken in conjunction with outside partners, we provide enhanced Out of Hours coverage. Partly, this is to ensure peace and quiet for our neighbours. The expanded team, augmented by additional part-time cleaners and maintenance staff, employed for the summer months, will provide 24-hour reception, smoothly regulate all traffic through the residence, ensure noise is kept to a minimum and provide security coverage inside and out.

Community, Student Lounge and Restaurant

Experience has shown us that well-designed communal spaces pay dividends in residents' well-being, fostering interaction and allowing mental space for de-stressing and unwinding. Accordingly, communal spaces will be well provided for in Cúirt na Coiribe. They will also represent a first-class amenity for summer visitors. The public spaces will comprise study and entertainment areas, increased café/restaurant options and a gym, totaling c. 1,700 sq m.

Entrance

The Reception will be open throughout the day enabling the

Reception Team to welcome and record details of all visitors to the property, thereby ensuring the maintenance of a secure and safe environment while at the same time dealing with any queries.

Study Space

Many students find that studying in a communal setting is more productive for them. For this reason, there will be a provision for ample communal study spaces, with two large dedicated study spaces in addition to a library/study and the availability of two multifunctional spaces.



Community, Student Lounge and Restaurant (cont.)

Entertainment

Rest and recreation will be provided for with a state-of-the-art digital cinema showing drama and sports events. In addition, a multi-functional games room will accommodate a more active mood.

Fitness

Following the ancient academic dictum of “Mens sana in corpore sano”, a fully equipped gym is provided for residents who wish to keep in shape.

Many generations of students have found benefit in balancing physical and mental effort and we support that philosophy to the full.

Socialising

A large party/function room will be available to host talks, meetings, parties and seminars, including the Welcome Events. The popular, on site but externally managed, Scotty’s American Diner will continue to serve residents and local residents and fostering a sense of community.



Community, Student Lounge and Restaurant (cont.)

RESTAURANT

The popular “Scotty’s American Diner” acts as coffee shop and restaurant.

Lauderette

Residents will have the use of high quality clothes washing equipment in the Launderette.

An additional café/restaurant in the expanded communal area, for the use of residents, will serve meals, while the new Lounge/Coffee Dock is the perfect place for residents getting together or enjoying a quiet break.

Outdoors

Cúirt na Coiribe, in addition to its landscaped lawn and relaxation areas, is surrounded by a wealth of adjacent public parks including Terryland Forest Park.

In the expanded Cúirt na Coiribe no student should feel crowded or confined in any way. Careful thought has been given, based on experience, to designing spaces that fit the needs of residents and visitors today and in the future.



Wellbeing and Pastoral Care

Wellbeing

As students transition out of secondary schooling into the self-directed milieu of university life there are typically a number of challenges to be faced in varying degrees: depression, homesickness, exam stress, health, interpersonal relationships, bullying, the list goes on. Starting with the Welcome Events, our Residence Team will seek to make the transition as smooth as possible. They are experienced in anticipating the problems that are likely to arise and can turn to well established procedures to manage issues that present themselves, in partnership with the student.

Pastoral Care

We maintain close links with the Student Support Services in NUI Galway who offer a wide range of advice and support services, including chaplaincy, counselling, health, life management. The Residence Team receives awareness training in how to observe signs of emotional stress and noting the significance of erratic behaviour.

The Residence Team also monitor Access Control System activity to spot unusual movements or rooms that have not been accessed for a period, in addition to routine Health and Safety checks.

Property Services

While the task of providing a clean comfortable environment in the common areas is the job of the Housekeeping Team, residents are responsible for their own rooms.

Housekeeping

The rooms are subject to regular inspections, one per term, to ensure that they are being maintained according to the License to Reside. A Cleaning and Damage deposit is retained on arrival to cover any extra work that may be required in the rare event of acceptable standards not being met. At the end of the licence period the rooms will be given a deep clean to prepare them for the next occupant.

The public areas, including stairwells, corridors and toilets are cleaned according to a pre-determined schedule in line with our Standard Operational Procedures. Assistance for disabled residents is available.

Waste and Recycling

Waste generated in the rooms and in the common areas is segregated for recycling at source and placed in the appropriate bins provided. They are of sufficient number and of varying sizes to suit the Waste Collection Service.

Deliveries and Collections

Most deliveries – servicing vending machine for instance are carried out by small vehicles with little disruption. There is ample space for occasional larger vehicles/deliveries, and Waste collections are made within office hours in line with Health and Safety protocols.

Antisocial Behaviour

The Management Team have primary responsibility for handling potential antisocial behaviour. This involves managing any behaviour that intrudes on others' enjoyment, in most cases involving excessive noise. One-to-one discussion is the preferred option and in most cases it goes no further than that, although in the case of significant damage or offence, financial penalties can be invoked. In extreme cases the Management Team are mandated to involve the Gardai.

Residents are made aware of their behavioural responsibilities from the time of their arrival. There is a clear statement of the rules governing acceptable behaviour on the website, included in the License to Reside. The Code of Conduct is a central feature of the Welcome Events.

The Management Team requires that noise levels at night, between 11pm and 7am, do not exceed 45dB, and social gatherings will be shut down immediately if they are in breach of this to the extent of causing annoyance to other residents or our neighbours. A 24 hour telephone service is available to our neighbours to inform the Management Team of antisocial behaviour.

Antisocial behaviour interventions are logged in order to monitor repeated breaches.

Community Liaison

Construction

Exeter aims to be a good neighbour from the beginning of construction right up through the operational phase of the Cúirt na Coiribe expansion. We will consult continuously and build constructive relationships with residents and local businesses to deliver a well-managed and beneficial asset to the community and the college.

Operation

A central pillar of our Good Neighbour Policy is respect for the right of the local community to a quiet life. To that end, residents will be required to sign a License to Reside agreement which sets out a code of behaviour for the duration of the license period. Particular consideration is given to the prevention of any activity that might cause nuisance to adjoining local residents. Short Stay residents, as part of their booking terms and conditions, are informed of their obligations to abide by the same rules.

Lines of communication

There is a 24-hour telephone service available for local residents to make the Cúirt na Coiribe Management Team aware of any antisocial activity that might be taking place. Full contact details will be circulated to local residents and businesses. At the beginning of each year representatives of local residents groups will be invited to meet the residents with the intention of building positive relationships in the context of sharing local advice. In the case of official student events held at Cúirt na Coiribe, advance notice will be given to local residents by the Management Team.

Health & Safety Management

Exeter is proactive in ensuring that Health and Safety standards are maintained to the highest degree. A number of external consultants assist in these areas:

Fire Risk Assessment

Gas Safety Certification

Health and Safety Risk Assessment

Water Risk Assessment

Access and Maintenance Procedures

The Health and Safety legislation and the guidelines published by statutory bodies form the basis of Exeter's approach. Initial assessments will be undertaken after construction is completed, with further assessments prior to move-in.

Full records will be kept of compliance issues, to include a repository of safety data.

Training will be given to staff to safeguard staff safety and compliance. Therefore all on-site staff at the building will undertake training in general Health & Safety issues as appropriate for their area of responsibility.

Move-out Strategy

The Move-out Procedure, similar to the Move-in Procedure, is managed in such a way as to ensure that the local neighbourhood is not overrun with vehicles and general traffic. The Management Team's goal is a time slot of 30 minutes to complete a departure, with belongings transferred and deposit forms completed.

The process will be less intensive than the move-in because it takes place over a longer period, dictated by residents' exams, sporting commitments and so on.

Taking the weekend following the exams as the most convenient, residents will be assigned time slots that spread out the move-outs over the course of each day.

Room inspections are similarly scheduled. These will take place a few hours before departure so that any so that the student can be made aware of any additional cleaning required and to assess if any damage has occurred.

Deposit forms can then be processed and arrangements made for deposits to be returned within 14 days.



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