



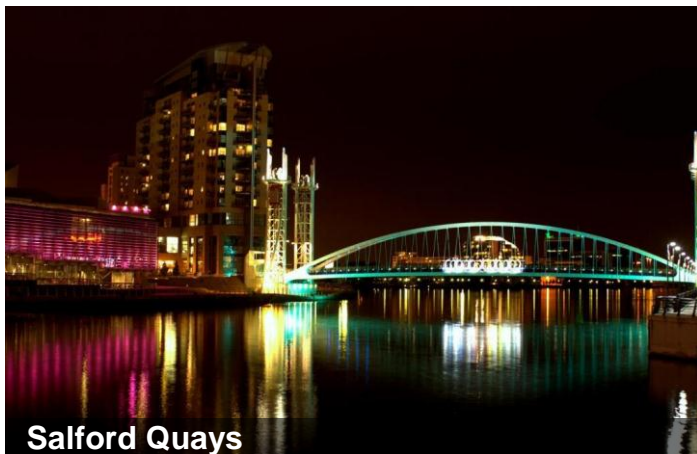
Manchester is the biggest city in the North West and, due to its large student and professional population, is a vibrant and exciting place to live. Famous for its Curry Mile and popular Christmas Markets, Manchester is full of things to do and see.

| Housing

Manchester is a thriving city with a large population of students and professionals. Living within the city centre is highly recommended, in particular, areas to begin your search are Deansgate and Castlefield. Here, £550-750pcm is the average cost for a decent studio/1 bedroom flat, and apartments of all sizes can be found in the Salford Quays development or the Green Quarter for prices between £550-900pcm.

Living further out of the centre, for example in Trafford, Altrincham or Stockport, makes housing more affordable while still allowing easy access to the city via the excellent tram network. Fallowfield is a popular area for students and is full of bars, pubs and clubs. Lots of cheap house shares are available here as it is where most student housing is available.

Slightly further out again is Didsbury, which offers a more relaxed atmosphere and is a popular choice for graduates and professionals. House shares are less common here, but nice 1 bed flats are available at around £550-800pcm and 2 bed properties at £800-1000pcm. You can get a metro into the city centre in just 15 minutes.



Manchester

| Things to do

Manchester City Centre has a wide variety of shops; the Arndale Centre and Market Street contain all the high street brands and much more. For those with more expensive taste, King Street is home to the high end stores, while Afflecks Palace offers more alternative shopping and includes a tattooist, hairdresser and café. Head towards Oldham Street if vintage is your style.

Around 25 minutes from the city centre and accessible by public transport, The Trafford Centre is the jewel in Manchester's crown. It has its own branch of Selfridges, in addition to a wide range of high street stores. The Centre has a wide variety of restaurants to choose from with great themes taking you to the streets of New Orleans or onboard the Titanic.



Manchester also hosts an excellent Christmas market between mid-November and Christmas, and is the place to go to drink mulled wine, eat German bratwurst and get into the festive spirit! There are also many pop-up food markets in spring and autumn and the Northern Quarter hosts a Sunday market with music and a variety of stalls. On a summer's day, go down to Heaton Park, Manchester's biggest city centre park, for a number of events ranging from fitness classes to outdoor concerts. Every year it hosts Parklife a huge festival attracting some of the worlds' best dance artists.

Mancunians love their sport, and have a long and proud history of being home to some of the greatest sporting venues in Britain. Keen cyclists should visit the National Cycling Centre and take a spin around the velodrome; if you're a football fan, visit Manchester United's home grounds at Old Trafford and take a stadium tour. Alternatively, if you're into



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trying something new, head to the 'Chill Factore' dry ski slopes or one of the indoor or outdoor climbing centres.

Entertainment-wise, Manchester Arena next to Victoria station hosts all of the biggest music and comedy acts and occasionally sports such as boxing and wrestling events.

For cultural pastimes, visit the Imperial War Museum North in Trafford, or The Lowry at Salford Quays. The Royal Exchange theatre hosts a range of plays, or try the Dancehouse Theatre for ballet. There are also a variety of art galleries and specialist museums, notably Manchester Art Gallery.



Spinningfields

| Food and Drink

There is a wide range of places to eat and drink in Manchester. The city centre is full of choice and both China Town and the "Curry Mile" in Rusholme are definitely worth a visit. Recommendations for restaurants include Chaophraya for Thai, Chroma, near the cathedral, for Italian, Dogs N Dough for American cuisine, and Richmond Tea Rooms for quintessentially British teas and lunches.

The Northern Quarter and Deansgate Locks are full of trendy bars and clubs and the new Spinningfields area hosts a number of great bars and restaurants including Fazenda a fantastic Brazilian rodizio. Oxford Road, where MMU university is based, has some good student pubs and bars, a gig venue (the Ritz) and a bowling place. Visit the Printworks in the city centre for Hard Rock Café and Tiger Tiger or the Corn Exchange for Indian street food or Italian from Gino de Campo. If need a treat grab a cocktail at

Manchester

Cloud 23 in the Hilton for panoramic views of Manchester.

Canal Street and the 'Gay Village' are also worth a visit, particularly during the annual four-day Manchester Pride LGBT festival in August. Highlights include New York New York bar and Baa Bar.

If you don't feel like leaving the house you can also get take away from most places through the Deliveroo delivery service.

| Transport Links

On foot: this is the best way to get to know the City. Generally if you live within the inner ring road of Manchester no-where is more than a 30 minute walk away.

Rail: Manchester has excellent rail connections. The main station is Manchester Piccadilly and from here you can travel to London Euston or Newcastle in just over 2 hours and Leeds/Sheffield in 55 minutes. Oxford Road and Victoria stations provide access to more local stops such as the Airport or Liverpool just 40 minutes away.

Metrolink: The trams are quite frequent and travel across the city and to the outskirts such as Altrincham, Didsbury and Rochdale. You can get unlimited travel for the whole weekend for just £5.80 and you can also travel for free between the main train stations if you have a valid train ticket.

Buses/taxis: Manchester has a wide reaching bus service taking you in and out of the city centre on a regular basis – to the airport, Trafford Centre, and outlying suburbs. Private hire taxis are fairly cheap with companies such as Street Cars and Uber has also arrived.

Driving: Traffic tends to be heavy in the city centre. You can find cheap parking for as little as £3.50 for 12 hours near the Northern or Green quarters.

Cycling: There are a number of cycle routes across the city.

| Civil Service Community

Civil Service offices in Manchester are primarily in Salford, Stockport, or Middleton, and there are DWP



offices in and around the city, including a contact centre in Chorlton. Home Office also has a presence at Manchester Airport and HMRC offices include Albert Bridge House and Trinity Bridge House. Manchester Council offers places to fast streamers as does HMP Manchester.

There are social reps for the North West of England who organise a number of fun events and meet ups for Fast Streamers in the area. Past events have included pub quizzes, Lake District walks and club nights. Look out for mail outs from the Fast Stream Forum to find out more information.

| Useful Links

<http://www.manchester.gov.uk/> - Contains lots of useful information.

<http://www.ilovemanchester.com> – for food and drink, culture and style.

<http://www.visitmanchester.com> - Use this to find suggestions on things to do during the weekend, days out etc.



Liverpool

With its unique attractions, world class sport offerings, musical heritage and famously warm welcomes, Liverpool is a great city in which to work, live and explore. The home of The Beatles, Liverpool is also a designated UNESCO World Heritage site.

| Housing

Liverpool has a lot to offer a prospective house hunter and you will find a variety of unique areas across the city. If you want to live right in the centre of things, you can't do better than Albert Dock and the immediate area, with 1 bed flats available for £500-600 pcm. As a general rule, the south of the city is more cosmopolitan and filled with students and young professionals due to its close proximity to the university campuses.

Popular areas such as Childwall, Allerton, Moseley Hill and Aigburth are close to the river and surrounded by green spaces. A decent 1 bed flat will cost around £400 – 550 pcm in Aigburth, with a 2 bedroom around £500-700 pcm. Sefton Park and Lark Lane are very lively and have a bohemian feel to them. A gem in the north of Liverpool is Crosby, which is outside of the city proper and has a great beach.

Further out of the city there is the Wirral which, although further away, has lot of green space and is cheaper for rent, with a 1 bed flat costing just £300-400 pcm. For families, a 3 bedroom house will cost around £600-800 pcm. St Helens and Prescot are also nice places to live if you want to be further from the centre; both are accessible with good train links.



Albert Dock

| Things to do

Liverpool is renowned for its history, its culture and of course, its shopping! You can find high street and high-end shops, plus independent traders in the sprawling Liverpool One complex, Bold Street and the very pretty Wayfarers arcade. There is a huge amount of variety within the city centre for those on the lookout for a bargain.

For music lovers, the Liverpool International Music Festival, Europe's biggest free music event, takes place in August. There are of course a range of Beatles related museums such as the Beatles Story, and more recent, international acts regularly perform at the Echo arena on the Liverpool waterfront. Theatre lovers will also find regular big and small productions across theatres in Liverpool. For cinema and the arts try out FACT or the Liverpool Small Cinema.



Liverpool Cathedral

Of course, Liverpool is home to two famous football clubs: Liverpool FC and Everton FC. The club rivalry is fierce and it's worth heading to a game if you get the chance. Liverpool also has more sporting offerings with the world famous Grand National taking place each year at Aintree race course.

Liverpool is home to a variety of museums and galleries, notably the Walker Art Gallery, Merseyside Maritime Museum and the International Slavery Museum. Many of these are centred around Albert Dock.

For family-oriented fun, Knowsley Safari Park and Chester Zoo offer great days out. There is also Spaceport, at Seacombe Ferry Terminal, which has lots of interactive exhibits relating to space and time. On the Wirral, visit the Floral Pavilion for theatre, ballet and ice shows!



| Food and Drink

Liverpool hosts all of the usual favourites, with a range of chain bars and restaurants – try Mowgli and other independent restaurants on Bold Street. For something a little different, try Free State Kitchen on Maryland Street for an American twist, or Lunya on College Lane for Spanish-style deli food. Sushi and bento lovers should try Etsu on The Strand.

Albert Dock, the heart of Liverpool's historic waterfront, is worth another mention for its good quality cafes and restaurants, some of which have won Michelin stars. At night time, Albert Dock is transformed into a lively hub of bars and comedy venues.

Liverpool has a great night life with popular bars and nightclubs in Mathew Street and the Ropewalks area. Seel Street has lots of independent bars, including Aloha and Blind Tiger.

| Transport



Liverpool Lime Street Station

Rail: It's only a short train journey from Liverpool Lime Street station to other UK cities such as Manchester (from 35mins), Leeds (from 1hr30) and London (from 2hr14).

Buses/taxis: There is a regular bus service throughout the city as well as 'Merseyrail', a metro rail system which extends all the way out to Chester and Southport and which connects all areas of Liverpool to the centre. See [Merseytravel](#) for more information. For taxis, try Alpha, who have a purpose built 'taxi station' on Duke Street.

Air: Liverpool has its own Liverpool John Lennon International Airport, situated in the south of the city; it is accessible via public transport.

Driving: The city is car friendly and has great access to motorways such as the M62. There is also a busy port with regular ferries to Ireland and the Isle of Man. However, owning a car is not essential due to the great public transport network. As the city centre is not too big, it is also easy to travel on foot.

Bikes: Liverpool also has the equivalent of the 'Boris' bike that can be rented out. There are also bike racks at all Merseyrail stations.

| Civil Service Community

The Home Office, HMRC, CCS are all based in the city centre. DWP, VOA and HSE are just 10 minutes away in Bootle. There is also HM Passport Office in Southport.

The local Fast Stream group for Liverpool is the North West Fast Streamers. The most up to date contact details for the group can be found on One HR.

| Useful Links

<http://www.liverpool.gov.uk/> - Contains lots of useful information.

<http://www.visitliverpool.com> – for food and drink, culture and style.

<http://www.liverpool-360.co.uk> - Use this to find suggestions on things to do during the weekend, days out etc.

<http://independent-liverpool.co.uk/> - For offers at independent businesses across Liverpool, including 10-20% off at restaurants.

<http://www.thinkingliverpool.com/> - For talks, debates and thought-provoking events in Liverpool



Warrington

Warrington is a town in the North West with a population of around 203,000. The first IKEA in the UK was opened just outside the town in 1987 and the first MMR vaccine was administered at Warrington General hospital. The town has excellent transport links to the North West and beyond.

outside of Manchester, is under half an hour's drive away. Cheshire Oaks outlet is also worth a visit and takes about 45 mins.

In Warrington itself there are plenty of gyms, a cinema, bowling, as well as the Warrington Museum and Art Gallery. The Trip Advisor favourite is Walton Hall and Gardens, just outside the town, which is definitely worth a visit in the summer.

| Housing

Due to the fairly rapid expansion of the town, and the growing number of businesses located in the Birchwood Park development, there are a large number of rental properties available. A room in a shared house will set you back around £300-£350pcm, a two bed roomed flat around £450-£550pcm. For those with families, a three bed roomed house will rent for around £600pcm. There are a large number of letting agents in the area and plenty of properties so you should be able to find something that you like.

Warrington is home to the Warrington Wolves who play at the Halliwell Jones stadium. Aintree racecourse is nearby, as well as the homes of the various Liverpool and Manchester football teams.

There are plenty of places to explore for days out including: Delamere forest, Tatton Park, Joderell Bank, as well as the coastal areas. If you are looking to go slightly further afield, you can be in the Lake District in just over an hour.

North Westers are very friendly and getting to know your new colleagues in your office is an excellent way to find out more about the area.



Warrington Town Hall

In terms of location, there are plenty of properties in the town centre (WA2) within walking distance of the shops and train stations. The areas of Padgate and Great Sankey also have a decent rental market if you want more of a community feel. If you drive, there are plenty of lovely villages in the surrounding areas as well: Croft always comes high up on the list.

| Food and Drink

Warrington has a handful of bars and restaurants, including Yates's, Wetherspoons, ASK, Prezzo, and Nando's. There are some excellent gastro pubs in the surrounding villages, but if you're after some slightly more high-end cuisine, Manchester or Liverpool are your best bet. Stockton Health has a good variety of bars and restaurants for a night out as well.

| Transport

Rail: Warrington has excellent rail connections with two major train stations. Warrington Bank Quay is on the West Coast mainline so you can be in London in less than 2 hours or Glasgow in 3.

From Warrington Central station, you can access the Trans Pennine and Northern rail networks, giving access to Liverpool in 30 mins, Manchester in 25 mins, and Leeds in 1hr 30 mins.

Buses/taxis: Warrington has a reliable bus service to get you around town ([Network Warrington](#)) and tickets can be bought on the bus. Taxis are fairly cheap - recommended firms are Abba cars and Direct Taxis.

| Things to do

Warrington has a wealth of shopping opportunities – most of the major retailers have a presence in the Golden Square development in the town centre. There is also a large market with over 200 stalls. Alternatively, there are many out of town retail parks, including Gemini where the famous IKEA is located.

Manchester (25 min by train) and Liverpool (30 min by train) city centres offer a wider range of shopping and entertainment, both make for a good day out. The Trafford Centre, a shopper's paradise just



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Driving: A car is very useful and allows you to explore the local area. Most properties come with parking spaces and having a car will make commuting and getting around much easier.



| Civil Service Community

There is a large DWP office situated at Birchwood Park. There is a vibrant community within the park, with a gym, restaurant, and regular events - see <http://parklife.birchwoodpark.co.uk/> There is also a NCA (National Crime Agency) office near Birchwood Park.

The local Fast Stream group for Warrington is the North West Fast Streamers.

| Useful Links

<https://www.warrington.gov.uk/>

<http://visitwarrington.com/>

[Top 10 Things to Do in Warrington - Trip Advisor](#)