

Virtual viewings introduced for flat-hunting students

City rental company Cullen Property is using technology to set up virtual property viewings for students who are prospective tenants.

With the use of video those looking for properties can take a tour of their future home for the new academic year without compromising everyone's need for social distancing.

Cullen Property Managing Director, Steve Coyle, said: "Every aspect of our daily lives has been affected by the adjustments required to adapt to this new Coronavirus and it's important that we all play our part. Last week we quickly moved our business to a work-from-home model to protect our team members but ensure continuity of service to our clients. This week we are launching a new system to help meet our client's rental demands as we are still handling many property viewing requests despite the current climate. This is where the concept of virtual viewings comes from."

The virtual viewings are the idea of Cullen Property Marketing Manager Scott Binnie, who has been working with the company's property and contracts managers as well as Cullen Property tenants to set them up.

Scott Binnie said: "Many students are currently self-isolating at their flats, and having prospective tenants walk around to take a look would be irresponsible at this time.

"Virtual viewings will allow prospective tenants to 'take a look' without current tenants being put in undue danger of catching the virus."

Whilst using video to showcase properties has been part of the viewing process for property lettings and sales agents for some time, it's rarely been the only way of viewing a flat offered to tenants.

Scott Binnie continues: "Our virtual viewings take things a step further by trying to give the prospective tenants the feeling of actually being in the flat. They can be conducted by one of Cullen Property's staff or by the current tenants themselves, if they prefer.

"This way, we can minimise contact between people who are not already living in close, proximity. If tenants choose to conduct the virtual viewing themselves, our staff will work with them – by email or over the phone – to ensure we showcase the property favourably."

Prospective tenants can book virtual viewings via Cullen Property's website and will then receive a WeTransfer link allowing them to see the property. They will be able to view their potential future home at a time convenient to them and for as many times as they like as well as share the link with their friends and potential roommates.

The lettings process that follows will be the same but will avoid unnecessary meetings wherever possible.

