Umang Gandecha Transition Document

As I prepare to transition out of my role as Executive Director, I have prepared this detailed handover document to ensure full continuity across all business functions. The following sections break down responsibilities, key contacts, outstanding tasks, and ongoing initiatives by department. My goal is to provide clarity, avoid duplication, and leave the team with a strong operational framework.

Gun Chat Excel, Deadlines, Roadmap , Opinions and Strategy, Tips

I will remain available for structured support for two weeks after my last working day, offering one hour per week to assist with any handover clarifications. For items that are complex or require greater explanation, I am happy to prepare short video walkthroughs to supplement this document.

Provider & Partner Management

- Provider Contacts: Complete list of current provider contacts, including Greystar, iQ, Unite, Vita, Downing, AXO, Mezzino, Paddington, Blumin Capital, Ivy Halls, Nurtur, Yugo, Your Tribe, Collegiate.
- China Operations: Ongoing reporting and oversight of the Shanghai branch, including Baidu listing, mini-program checks, and parent group communications.
- Contracts: Ensure all provider contracts, room buying negotiations, and 44-week agreements are finalized and documented.

Provider Negotiations https://londonistdmc.monday.com/boards/9644691869

Provider	Contact Details
Chapter	mhatch@greystar.com melissa.cubillos@greystar.com tom.starling@greystar.com
iQ	Brett.Cordle@iqstudent.com Matt.Merrick@iqstudent.com James.Mortimer@iqstudent.com
Unite	Philip.Lewis@unitestudents.com Ana.LopesDeAraujo@unitestudents.com Bernadette.Cochonat@unitestudents.com
Vita	max.bielby@vitagroup.com Andy.Hawkes@vitastudent.com
Downing	michellewinrow@downing.com tariqakbar@downing.com
AXO	priya.crook@axostudent.co.uk
Mezzino	chris@mezzino.co.uk colin@mezzino.co.uk
Paddington	rajsehgal@union-property.co.uk

	nareshabrol@union-property.co.uk
Blumin Capital	fb@5ivecapital.com
Ivy Halls	martyn@ivyhalls.co.uk alexie@gilini.co.uk
Nurtur Student	emma.young@nurturstudentliving.com enquiries@nurturhouse.com

26/27 Room Buying

Paddington: https://londonistdmc.monday.com/boards/8691306328

Others

Provider	Contact Details
Yugo	Eva.Collingwood@yugo.com Lee.Quayle@yugo.com
Your Tribe	emma.sadler@yourtribe.com duncan.palmer@yourtribe.com
Collegiate	atolson@collegiate-ac.com ajones@collegiate-ac.com mstanding@collegiate-ac.com yzhou@collegiate-ac.com
Aparto	Fathi.Mohamoud@apartostudent.com

Sales

- Strategies & Campaigns: Christmas and January strategy, re-bookers campaign, smart placements, up-selling products.
- Operational Sales Tasks: Sellable weeks planning and rota allocation, onboarding calls for Verbaflo, deposit/payment tracking (including Paddington dual occupancy cases), pending licence agreements, champion analyses review.
- Pricing & Systems: Current academic year pricing shifts, including Umang's notes for team explanation.
- VerbaFlow Checks
- Updated Residence Fact Sheets per Residence
- Platforms: Lavanda, UniFlx, OTA integrations.

pms.lavanda.app/login
https://dashboard.hostaway.com/login

Finance

- Budgeting & Forecasts: Updated budget, forecasts, and profit file.
- Tax & Compliance: Global tax review, HMRC authority for Londonist DMC Ltd, RND/business rates.
- Payments & Refunds: Barclays payments, deposit refund approvals, cancellations, chargeback checks, reconciliation.
- Loans & Investments: Uninist cash injections, outstanding investments, loan updates, Fischer spotlight. https://londonistdmc.monday.com/boards/18012473592
- Audit & Reporting: Audit completion, provider payment files, China branch ledgers, SRG accountant follow-up.

Funding Projects: https://helptogrow.campaign.gov.uk/funding-and-financial-support/

HR

- Manpower & Structure: Updated organisational chart, redundancy planning, interns post-August, team incentives (share scheme).
- Commissions: October commission checks, platform comms updates to sales agents.
- Recruitment & Incentives: Sales leaders' bonus planning, internship planning, and commission structure checks.

Legal

- Ongoing Cases: Fischer case, council tax cases, student legal cases.
- Student Cases: https://londonistdmc.monday.com/boards/9601076040 & https://londonistdmc.monday.com/boards/10049051198

Operations

- Residences: Chapter Spitalfields, Paddington, Unite, Downing – planning residence allocations, deep cleaning, room hand-backs, and September residence plan.
- Events & Services: Departure events, breakfast service at Paddington & Seven Sisters, StuBuddy coordination.
- Provider Meetings: Ongoing meetings and portal management.

Marketing

- Budgeting: 25/26 budget and allocation: https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/19RkjMSuBfCLE9jK2W_Re1JJphlca47jS6p2nTwkG45k/edit?gid=0#gid=0
- Campaigns: Dateme strategy, No Fluff Fest, Fringe events, Start Smart bulk buying.
- Digital Channels: Baidu (paused), Red Book reporting, influencer updates, competitor bidding checks.
- Submissions & Awards: PIE Awards, BETA Awards, other industry submissions.

Award Submissions



Growth / Business Development / Partnerships

- Campaign Planning: Platform boost campaign, , Trulioo discussions.
- Partnerships: London MET contract, Homelike, Verbaflo, GP services.
- Reports & Analyses: Room buying PDF analysis, Unite sales report, buying report PDF. file:///C:/Users/Umang%20Gandecha/Downloads/AY%2025.26%20BUYING%20PORTFOLIO%20(3).pdf
- Events & Recognition: Alphe planning, scholarships, pending refunds, gifts planning.

Growth

- Hubby E-sim, Heathrow, Brompton, Taste Card

Agencies

- Endless Group Management and Bookings

Marketplaces:

https://amberstudent.com/connect/promotions

BD:

Associations/Events Management

Association	Contact
BETA	Emma English eenglish@betauk.com
English UK	
UKINBOUND	events@ukinbound.org
ALTO	Reka Lenart reka.lenart@altonet.org

Study Travel	Giovanna Veronezi giovanna@studytravel.network
ICEF	Ross Holmes rholmes@icef.com

School Name	Source Name	POC	Email
Bayswater	Institution	Sarah Byrne Wienda Heriana-Keers Diandra	sarah@bayswater.ac Wienda@bayswater.ac liverpoolaccom@bayswater.ac
MC Academy	Institution	Nisrin Felipe (Liverpool) Khadidja (Manchester)	
English Path	Institution	Michael Doody Sian Matos	mdoody@englishpath.com smatos@englishpath.com
Kaplan	Institution	Siobhan Kateryna Rimmer Suki Liliia Bondarenko Sofi Bacon	siobhan.alichikh@kaplan.com sofi.bacon@kaplan.com (liverpool & Oxf kateryna.rimmer@kaplan.com (Manchest Suki Bains (manchesteraccommodation@kaplan.com liliia.bondarenko@kaplan.com
Language Gallery	Institution	Mohamed Faiq	mohamed.faiq@thelanguagegallery.com
Edskills	Institution		

Grand Bahama Shipyard Limited	Client	Elvardo Kemp Ms. Linda Turnquest	ekemp@gbshipyard.com lturnquest@gbshipyard.com
The Engineering College	University	Terry Weston	t.weston@theengineeringcollege.co.uk
Berlitz	Institution		
LILA	Institution		
HIL	Institution	David Lake	
Winsor Education	Institution	Abdul Wahib Adib	a.wahid@winsoreducation.org.uk adibn@winsoreducation.org.uk
Uk Study Group	Agency	Fadi	
Scraye	Agency	Eduard Pistea	eduard.pistea@scraye.com
Future	Agency	Salman	
Yorkshire College	Institution	Heba	
Aslen Edu	Agency		
University of Law	University	Monika	monika.singh@law.ac.uk
EC English	Institution	Isabel	
Arden/Student's Nest	Institution/Agent	Shaluu Beadi/ Lakshya Beadi	lakshhaybedi@gmail.com
Express English College	Institution	Ed Carey	edward@expressenglishcollege.co.uk
Edskills	Institution	Imran Iqbal	
Future Plan for Education Consulyancy	Agency	Salman Saad	futureplan222@gmail.com

Action Lists

- Activity Reports
- Open Day Plan Events
- Intership Roadmap

Year Calendar:
https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1AbaPMCWMD05PsziCLlDLwE9GyKyP-2R9CSZYsLefb7Q/edit?gid=0#gid=0

Action Plan: https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1_xmJPvbsKZFeQLdi-zlLWve9OEi7MmsRY0zi1zj8jEg/edit?pli=1&hl=en_GB&gid=1090473572#gid=1090473572

Virtual Fringe Agent Follow Up https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1ONeWKt5fH-BOO_L1G_ohF7csiatch01X-ruHbk3S-Fw/edit?gid=0#gid=0

UTM Institution Follow Ups: https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1kMQlO8M69s78wj0PzdJZYniCh7cVhK3FK9rCdnYmnE8/edit?gid=0#gid=0

Marketplaces:

Competitor Analysis: https://londonistyurtdisi-my.sharepoint.com/:x:/g/personal/busra_bakar_londonist_co_uk/EQ3pIazc1q9MjBDY1Tkd3ZMBAdjIxmcmdX9ipuF6Ykwfqg?e=MH2mZU

https://amberstudent.com/list
https://pro.uhomes.com/login?redirect=%2Fhome%2Finsights%3Ftrk%3Dpublic_post-text

IT

- Projects: Guest Journey platform, AI dynamic pricing,
- Trulioo integration: https://portal.trulioo.com/Account/LogOn
- 'Don't Move Room' Tags Update
- Smart Placements

China

- Marketing & Sales: WeChat mini-programs, Red Book checks, Uhomes campaigns.
- Operations: Salary increase/holiday discussions, branch restructuring, new subsidiary planning.
- Family Groups: Ongoing family group planning.
- Paid Ads Budget and Red Book Review
- Social Media Post Approvals with Bianca
- China Affiliates to work: https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1HHiW24bD6A04tPhAJZUNIMqr-tfaRZ08SOPigjhrQyY/edit?gid=0#gid=0

China Platforms

Booking platforms	Contact email
Uhouzz	uhomesuk@uhomes.com rio.cao@uhomes.com
Awehome	john@awehome.com
Hoolihome	changenqi@hoolihome.com
Funliving	jeffrey.yang@funliving.com
Hino-student	xueweihu@hinostudent.com
Firefly housing	cuiyi0925@gmail.com
Bright moon home	peter@bmhome.com.cn
Whale Bay living	victor.liu@whalebayliving.com
Punuo living	punuoliving@foxmail.com
51 Room	booking@51room.com

Uninist

Management

- Provider Room Buying
- Provider Room Buying Payments: Status update and pending actions.

Finance

- Reverse Charge: Checks
- Budget & Cash Flow: Review position,
- Debt Collection: STA debts
- VAT returns, RC Loan agreement Shanghai, Reverse Charge compliance, provider contracts.

Sales

- **Performance Metrics**:
  - Average Buying (£217.50) vs. Average Selling (£276.17) – Benchmarking
- **Markets & Opportunities**:
  - Top countries September: China, Colombia, UK.
  - Residences to prioritise: CRM, Leeds Oxley, Vita Manchester, Scape Leeds.
  - Platform inquiries – assign ownership.

Legal

- Contracts:

Warminster

Main Board: https://londonistdmc.monday.com/boards/6626320778

- Development & Planning: Finance, agent coordination, deposit returns, planning approvals, follow-ups with Eralp and Omer Bey.
- Development Finance: https://www.shawbrook.co.uk/property-finance/development-finance/
- Gas Safety Certificates
- Truuli Letting Agent: nana.akoto@truuli.co.uk

Management & Governance

- Board Meetings: Actions, follow-ups, and contracts.
- Leases & Rent: Office rent lease management.
- Oversight: Benchmark International monitoring, provider contracts, and business management processes.
- WhistleBlow File Update: https://find-and-update.company-information.service.gov.uk/company/09414005

Londonist Investments

Developer	Contact Details
Berkeley Group	Mouna BenCheikh mouna.bencheikh@berkeleygroup.co.uk
JLL	Sybil Wang sybil.wang@jll.com
Knight Frank	Evan Yu evan.yu@knightfrank.com
Hill Group	Connie Kao conniekao@hill.co.uk
Hamptons	Matt Goldsworthy goldsworthym@hamptons.co.uk

Useful Information

Industry Reports/Research https://londonistdmc.monday.com/boards/1068204937

This document has been prepared to give each department and team member a clear roadmap of responsibilities, ongoing priorities, and key external contacts. I am confident in the team's ability to continue driving Londonist forward.

Following my departure, I will be available for the next two weeks (one hour per week) to support a smooth transition. Where further clarity is needed, I will provide short video explanations to ensure continuity. Thank you for your collaboration and commitment during this period.

Team Distribution Suggestions



Overview

Person	Responsibilities
Asim Bey	Room Buying, Pricing Approvals, Contracts
Fulya Hanim	Re-Bookers Launch, Provider Portal
Mustafa	Sales Monitoring, Warminster Project
Joy	Deposit Refunds, Finance Reconciliation

Asim Bey

- Room Buying 26/27
- 26/27 Launch and Rates
- Board Meetings Monthly
- Pricing Approvals
- Contract Signing (Employment Contracts)
- Agency Contract Agreements
- DocuSign
- Dan Smith

Fulya Hanim

- 26/27 Re-Bookers Launch Plan
- Provider Portal

Mustafa

- Sales Group Monitoring
- Add Mustafa to SPV Group
- Warminster Project: https://londonistdmc.monday.com/boards/6626320778

Key Contacts

Contractor	Contact Details
Allsop (Selling Agent of Property)	Will Taylor Will.Taylor@allsop.co.uk Arthur Landman Arthur.Landman@allsop.co.uk
Regency Solicitors	Bahar Gundogdu bahar@regencysolicitors.com
Mortgage Advisor	Rasit Gundogdu Rasitaziz@gmail.com
Shawbrook Finance	Rhys Evans Rhys.Evans@shawbrook.co.uk
Architect	Bora Berker bora@bourne-management.co.uk Asena Koksal asena@bourne-architects.co.uk
Planning Permission	Eralp Semi: efplanning@outlook.com
Croydon Council	George Clarke: george.clarke@croydon.gov.uk
Letting Agent	Nana Akoto nana.akoto@truuli.co.uk

*Tenant File to be shared separately

Anil/ Anna

- Completing Monthly Team Rota's -Sales and China https://londonistyurtdisi-my.sharepoint.com/:x:/g/personal/emre_cakir_londonist_co_uk/EQtlUXX8cv5ArVRIC7w7EBwBVk-GbrbfiFLfSPekmJcnkw?e=KN50n7
- Bright HR Team Leave Approval Process
- Payroll Checks

Aayush

Booking Platforms

Platform	Contact
University Living	mayankmh@universityliving.com badal@universityliving.com
Amber	sarthak@amberstudent.com shrey@amberstudent.com
Uni Acco	priyam@uniacco.com
CASITA	rm@casita.com
Student.com	tom.bray@student.com

Joy

- Deposit Refunds and Student Refund Approvals
- Platform Reconciliation
- Audit Firm and Accounting
- CCI Tracking
- Global Tax Follow Up: sarin.shringi@aventuspartners.co.uk
- Chargeback Case Reviews
- Budget vs Actual Monthly Review
- Benchmark International: https://londonistdmc.monday.com/boards/6542145762

Strategies on Business

Sales & Targets

- Average selling price is £481.74/week – consistency here is key. Encourage teams not to discount below sustainable margins.

Occupancy & Sales Efficiency

- The critical occupancy benchmark is 75% (450 weeks sold per week) – this is the realistic sweet spot for hitting targets.
- Push beyond 80–85% occupancy only if pricing discipline is maintained (don't chase volume at the expense of value).
- Keep a close eye on unsold weeks– every conversion here has a direct impact.

Seasonal Sales Distribution

- Sales are heavily back-loaded into summer and autumn:
    - July (11.91%), August (14.80%), September (14.07%) are peak months.
- Winter (Dec–Feb) is quieter, but gaps should be filled via short-term/Xmas deals and partnerships.
- Plan early campaigns ahead of October–November (~10% combined share) to maximize the pre-holiday window.

Focus Universities & Agencies

- Top-performing universities: UCL, King's, Kaplan, Queen Mary, Imperial. Keep strong relationships here.
- Top agencies: Fireflyhousing, XiaohongShu, Amber Healthcare Solutions, Uhouzz, Awehome.
- Team should double down on these proven partners while nurturing emerging agencies (e.g., CASITA, University Living).
- Be mindful of the Christmas/Winter gap (15 Dec – 15 Jan) – plan special promotions or flexible contracts.

Market Mix

- International bookings are strong: China, India, US, Taiwan, UK
- Encourage the team to **align marketing with these top geographies**, but don't ignore **emerging demand from Turkey, Saudi, Pakistan, and EU markets**.

Overall

1. Prioritize summer/autumn campaigns – these months drive the year.
2. Leverage top agencies and universities – 80% of results are coming from them.
3. Be proactive with winter gap strategies – short stays, bundled offers, flexible packages.

4. Track unsold inventory weekly – aim for consistent reduction.
5. Keep data-led focus – use past seasonal patterns to anticipate and act, not react.

Sales Team Points

Sales Principles

- Customer-centric: put client needs first.
- Consultative selling: ask questions, uncover needs, tailor offers
- Relationship-building: trust drives repeat business.

Sales Techniques

- Value proposition: location, community, support, security.
- Visual tools: use photos, videos, virtual tours.
- Follow-up: persistence turns leads into bookings.
- Closing techniques:
    - Assumptive close: act as if they've already decided.
    - Urgency close: highlight limited availability.
    - Alternative close: give two strong choices

Sales KPIs

- Conversion rate – % inquiries to bookings.
- Lead response time – speed is critical.
- Pipeline conversion – move clients through sales funnel.
- Average deal size – aim higher.
- Customer satisfaction – track feedback.
- Sales cycle length – work to shorten it.

Habits for Success

- Respond quickly and professionally.
- Always listen actively and clarify.
- Show integrity, empathy, and professionalism in every interaction