

OUR VISION

We will create an affordable, environmentally responsible, socially responsive, economically sustainable, enterprising, inspiring, and replicable community; on a development of approximately 28 plots for a mix of micro, tiny & small houses, in which the smaller living space of the properties is offset against significantly sized shared communal areas. The community will be an interconnected, multi-generational co-operative, informed by the characteristics of co-housing; self-supporting and strong through its diversity; offering a vision to Bristol, the United Kingdom and the world of a more responsible way of living.

- **Affordable** - a community created from a mix of self-build, part-build and pre-built micro, tiny & small houses, smaller living spaces being more affordable to build, run and maintain.
- **Environmentally responsible** - a community planned to have as positive and as permanent an impact as possible on the environment; consuming less, recycling more; utilising green technology and working methods in its planning, construction and continued existence.
- **Socially responsive** - a community that is supportive and self-governing; with a proportion of social housing; actively seeking to be multi-generational; pooling and sharing resources, skills, and time; committed to educational and volunteer work.
- **Economically sustainable** - a community that produces a substantial proportion of its own energy, and food, maximising yields through careful management of its growing techniques.
- **Enterprising** - a community that generates an income to support itself.
- **Inspiring** – a community that exemplifies a better way of living, through the success of its vision; through the happiness and well-being of its inhabitants; and through active engagement and education programmes.
- **Replicable** – a community that shares its successes and challenges publicly, openly and without cost, so that it can be a model for other such developments.
- **Communal** – a community that pools and shares resources, skills and time; the shared communal spaces not only providing facilities that are impractical in a smaller living space, but also acting as a focus and meeting point for all.
- **Co-operative** – a community that is formed and run as a co-operative, according to the seven principles of co-operation (appended).

OUR VALUES AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Everyone has the right to a home, regardless of economic or social status.

We have an unavoidable responsibility and duty to the planet, its ecosystems and the environment, and these inform the way we choose to conduct our lives.

Human beings function best and live most happily in communities whose members have an active responsibility to each other, and to all the communities with which they interact.

Where possible, food, resources and income should be grown, generated, earned and spent locally, and, as far as possible, for the greater benefit of the community.

Actions taken and decisions made should be of potential benefit to everyone on the planet, not just the community.

By choosing to live in smaller spaces in a co-operative community, we reduce our impact on the planet, we better serve the communities around us, and we improve the quality of our lives in all aspects.

These values and principles will guide and inform our decisions and actions, and will be reviewed at regular intervals, initially every six months.

Agreed on: June 1st, 2017

Review date: December 1st 2017

APPENDIX 1 – The Seven Principles of Co-operation (as agreed by the International Co-operative Alliance 1994)

1st Principle: Voluntary and Open Membership

"Co-operatives are voluntary organisations, open to all persons able to use their services and willing to accept the responsibilities of membership, without gender, social, racial, political or religious discrimination."

2nd Principle: Democratic Member Control

"Co-operatives are democratic organisations controlled by their members, who actively participate in setting their policies and making decisions. Men and women serving as elected representatives are accountable to the membership. In primary co-operatives members have equal voting rights (one member, one vote) and co-operatives at other levels are also organised in a democratic manner."

3rd Principle: Member Economic Participation

"Members contribute equitably to, and democratically control, the capital of their co-operative. At least part of that capital is usually the common property of the co-operative. Members usually receive limited compensation, if any, on capital subscribed as a condition of membership. Members allocate surpluses for any or all of the following purposes: developing their co-operative, possibly by setting up reserves, part of which at least would be indivisible; benefiting members in proportion to their transactions with the co-operative; and supporting other activities approved by the membership."

4th Principle: Autonomy and Independence

"Co-operatives are autonomous, self-help organisations controlled by their members. If they enter to agreements with other organisations, including governments, or raise capital from external sources, they do so on terms that ensure democratic control by their members and maintain their co-operative autonomy."

5th Principle: Education, Training and Information

"Co-operatives provide education and training for their members, elected representatives, managers, and employees so they can contribute effectively to the development of their co-operatives. They inform the general public - particularly young people and opinion leaders - about the nature and benefits of co-operation."

6th Principle: Co-operation among Co-operatives

"Co-operatives serve their members most effectively and strengthen the co-operative movement by working together through local, national, regional and international structures."

7th Principle: Concern for Community

"Co-operatives work for the sustainable development of their communities through policies approved by their members."

NB Principles 1-4 are legal requirements of any co-operative.

APPENDIX 2 – The Six Basic Characteristics of Cohousing

(Source: livewellcohousing.ca)

1. Participatory process

Future residents participate in the design of the community so that it meets their needs. Some cohousing communities are initiated or driven by a developer. A well-designed, pedestrian-oriented community without significant resident participation in the planning may be “cohousing-inspired,” but it is not a cohousing community.

2. Neighborhood design

The physical layout and orientation of the buildings (the site plan) encourage a sense of community and social interactions. For example, the private residences are clustered on the site, leaving more shared open space. The goal: create a strong sense of community using physical design choices.

3. Common facilities. Common facilities are designed for daily use, are an integral part of the community, and are always supplemental to the private residences. Participating in the community is always optional, not required. Since the buildings are clustered, larger sites may retain several or many acres of undeveloped shared open space.

4. Resident management. Residents manage their own cohousing communities, and also perform much of the work required to maintain the property. They participate in the preparation of common meals, and meet regularly to solve problems and develop policies for the community.

5. Non-hierarchical structure and decision-making. Leadership roles naturally exist in cohousing communities, however no one person (or persons) has authority over others. Most groups start with one or two “burning souls.” As people join the group, each person takes on one or more roles consistent with his or her skills, abilities or interests. Most cohousing groups make all of their decisions by consensus or similar forms of consent decision-making, and, although many groups have a policy for voting if the group cannot reach consensus after a number of attempts, it is rarely or never necessary to resort to voting.

6. No shared community economy. The community is not a source of income for its members. Occasionally, a cohousing community will pay one of its residents to do a specific (usually time-limited) task, but more typically the work will be considered that member’s contribution to the shared responsibilities.

NB These are typical characteristics of successful co-housing projects, rather than legal requirements.