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# Chartered Institute of Housing [South-west]

## The role of Cohousing in developing "mutual" neighbourhoods

7 April 2011

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# The role of Cohousing in developing "mutual" neighbourhoods

## Content of presentation :

- to note the current interest in "mutual" housing
- to clarify Cohousing's essential characteristics
- to note key sources of information
- to look at UK Cohousing initiatives
- a look at promoting opportunities for Cohousing
- liaison between academic and housing sectors

# Cohousing and "mutual" neighbourhoods

- The current interest in "mutual" housing
  - Commission on Co-operative & Mutual Housing
  - Mutual Housing Sector Group & finance
  - National Land Trust Network
  - DCLG 'self build' considerations

# Cohousing and "mutual" neighbourhoods

**INSIDE  
HOUSING**

Wednesday, 30 March 2011



Co-housing schemes are a great way to build stronger communities and are becoming ever more popular, says Bill Randall

## Joining forces

25/03/2011

# Cohousing and "mutual" neighbourhoods

- Cohousing's key .....

..an 'intentional neighbourhood', in which the local residents craft and live out their own vision for private and shared spaces....

# Cohousing and "mutual" neighbourhoods

- Cohousing's essential characteristics

1. Combination of private & communal space
2. Designed for social interaction
3. A focus upon sustainable dynamics
4. Resident-led decision-making

# Cohousing and "mutual" neighbourhoods

## 1. Combination of private & communal space

- self-contained accommodation
- private and common garden areas
- common /shared facilities (laundry, hobbies, workspace, guests)
- common 'house' / dining facilities



# Cohousing and "mutual" neighbourhoods

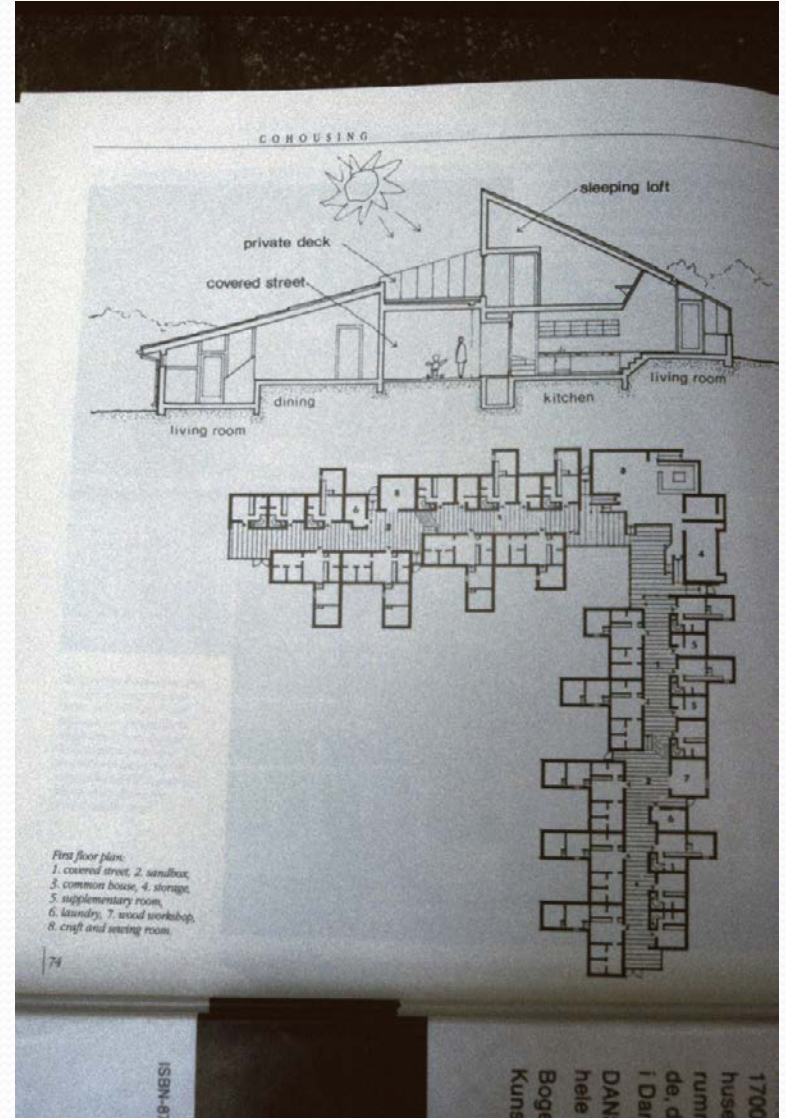
## 2. Designed for social interaction

- intentional and incidental contact
- vehicle-free, pedestrian-friendly
- deliberate juxtaposition of homes and facilities
- integration of common space(s)

# Cohousing and "mutual" neighbourhoods

## 3. A focus upon sustainable dynamics

- size and scale to support personal relationships
- not too big, nor too small
- Danish guide : 10 - 40 adults
- more than 1 scheme in larger neighbourhoods
- inter-generational combinations



# Cohousing and "mutual" neighbourhoods

## 4. Resident-led decision-making

- legal structures for common ownership
- Management of all design & development stages
- long-term neighbourhood management
- local policies: standards, funds, 'work time', successions, eco-values, *et al*

# Cohousing and "mutual" neighbourhoods

- Key sources of Cohousing information

<http://www.cohousing.org.uk>

<http://www.cohousing.org>

<https://www.edgeoftime.co.uk>

<http://www.mccamant-durrett.com>

<http://www.ecoarc.co.uk>

2011 : 'Cohousing – a Diggers & Dreamers Review'

# Cohousing and "mutual" neighbourhoods

- Examples of UK cohousing schemes:

CoHousing *before* 'Cohousing'

Community Project, East Sussex

Springhill, Stroud

Threshold Centre , Cole Street Farm

Halton, Lancaster

OWCH, London; Lilac Project, Leeds

# Thundercliffe Grange, Yorkshire



# Cannon Frome, Herefords.







Springhill, Stroud



# Community Project, Laughton, East Sussex



The Threshold Centre, Cole Street, Dorset



Halton, Lancaster

## Other UK projects:

- OWCH
- Lilac project
- Network groups

# Cohousing and "mutual" neighbourhoods

- Promoting opportunities for Cohousing development:
  - Cohousing Network NESTA project
  - New 'loan fund' via Mutual Housing sector
  - 'Intentional neighbourhoods' in 'modular' newbuild
  - Policies for 'mutual' ideas, especially cross-tenure
  - DCLG support for wider 'commissioning' (>CRTB)
  - 'Support' bodies in SW : e.g. Synergy / Ecos Trust

# Cohousing and "mutual" neighbourhoods

- Liaison between academic and housing sectors:
  - Collaboration on policy reports and proposals
  - Examination of impact from 'mutual' schemes
  - 'Mutual' role in wider 'sustainable communities' (e.g. property speculation / utility management...)
  - Examination of new strategies e.g. for older people
  - 'Benchmarking' of optimum developments

# Cohousing and "mutual" neighbourhoods

- Concluding remarks / open discussion:
  - ... more than just design....
  - ... more than solely 'mutual'....
  - ... more than simply being neighbourly....



# Cohousing and "mutual" neighbourhoods

- *Poem from CLT conference:*

My boy was born today, where will he play?

Will he play indoors on his own, all alone?

Will he play in the road, with the cars?

Will he play in the park, far away?

Let us get rid of the cars.

Let us know our neighbours.

Let us build a community together.

Let us talk in the streets, with no cars.

Let the children play.

Let the adults play.

Let the old people play.

Let the children play.

[R.Delorenzi, June 2010]