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[Conference, 2011]

What is Cohousing?

23 July 2011
Dr. Martin Field
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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 sources of information on Cohousing
- 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 Community Land Trust Network
  - DCLG ‘Self Build’ Action Plan (July 2011)
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
Place: Amherst, Mass., US
Place : Amherst, Mass., US
Place: Amherst, Mass., US
Place: Common House, Amherst, Mass., US
Place: Common House, Amherst, Mass., US
Place: Cambridge, Mass., US
Place: Cambridge, Mass., US
Place: Cambridge, Mass., US
Place: Common facilities, Cambridge, Mass., US
Place: Common facilities, Cambridge, Mass, US
Place: Common parking, Cambridge, Mass., US
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)
Place: Cambridge, Mass, US
Place : Jydstrup, Denmark
Place: Jydstrup, Denmark
Place : Jydstrup, Denmark
Place: Greater Copenhagen, Denmark
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
Place: Jydstrup, Denmark
Cohousing and "mutual" neighbourhoods

4. Resident-led decision-making

- legal structures for common ownership
- management of all design & development stages
- long-term neighbourhood management
- self-determined policies: standards, funds, ‘work time’, successions, eco-values, *et al*
Place : Community Project, East Sussex
Cohousing and "mutual" neighbourhoods

- Key sources of Cohousing information
  - http://www.cohousing.org.uk
  - http://www.cohousing.org (US network)
  - 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.
Community Project, Laughton, East Sussex
Community Project, Laughton, East Sussex
Community Project, Laughton, East Sussex
Community Project, Laughton, East Sussex
Community Project, Laughton, East Sussex
Community facilities, Laughton, East Sussex
Self build properties, Community Project, Laughton, East Sussex
Springhill, Stroud
Springhill, Stroud
Springhill, Stroud
Springhill, Stroud
Springhill, Stroud
Common House, Springhill, Stroud
Common House, Springhill, Stroud
Common House, Springhill, Stroud
Springhill, Stroud
Springhill, Stroud
The Threshold Centre, Gillingham, Dorset
The Threshold Centre, Gillingham, Dorset
The Threshold Centre, Gillingham, Dorset
The Threshold Centre, Gillingham, Dorset
The Threshold Centre, Gillingham, Dorset
The Threshold Centre, Gillingham, Dorset
The Threshold Centre, Gillingham, Dorset
Forge Bank, Lancaster
Ecological Cohousing Project Forge Bank Halton

Forge Bank, Lancaster
Ecological Cohousing Project: Forge Bank, Halton

Proposed Site Plan Option 17

Work Stage 3: Detailed Design

Forge Bank, Lancaster
Ecological Cohousing Project; Forge Bank, Halton

Terrace F_26-29 Elevations
Ecological Cohousing Project; Forge Bank, Halton

New Build Common House Elevations

Forge Bank, Lancaster
Other UK projects:

- **OWCH** - longstanding group development
  - subject of key reports
  - partnership with RSL sector
  - site in Barnet, North London

- Lilac project, Leeds – mixed tenure, mutual ownership, planning permission

- Cohousing 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)
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]