



# Hope Cohousing Newsletter

December 2024

## Hope Cohousing is going to the Scottish Parliament!

On 21 January we will be taking part in a Cohousing Scotland event at Holyrood. Sponsored by Highlands Green MSP Ariane Burgess it will be an opportunity to promote the Cohousing movement in general and Hope Cohousing in particular. We will report back in our Spring newsletter and via our website: [hopecohousing.org](http://hopecohousing.org).



## Open house

Our regular open meeting takes place on the first Saturday of the month. Do come along to join us. Details on the website (above) and on our Facebook page. In December we met in the Ben End at St Margaret's Church in the Hope, a cosy space to catch up, exchange news and share a cuppa. In the New Year monthly gatherings in both Kirkwall and Stromness are planned.

At the December meeting we were very pleased to welcome Councillor James Moar, one of our elected members for East Mainland, Burray and South Ronaldsay, and Roger Jackson a member of both the Burray and South Ronaldsay Community Council and Burray Community Association.

## Learning from others

Over the last few weeks we have been talking about the project with quite a range of people including elected members, Voluntary Action Orkney and Orkney Housing Association (OHAL). Other meetings are planned for after Christmas. The feedback we get is immensely valuable, helping us to shape our thinking and actions. On the next page we share some of the questions that come up.



We have also gained a lot from our involvement in Cohousing Scotland. Their monthly newsletter is worth a look. December's edition includes articles on thinking about loneliness at Christmas; the Lenzie Cohousing story; and the forthcoming Scottish Parliament event on community responses to the housing emergency. There is always news from other Scottish cohousing groups: [cohousing.scot](http://cohousing.scot).

## Recent work

During 2024 Hope Cohousing has worked on several important elements of the project management, especially governance

structure, legal issues such as allocations policy, and the all-important financial plan for construction. With the pre-construction phase completed and all statutory requirements in place, the development is shovel ready. Work can begin as soon as funding is fully in place – though this is a challenge in current economic conditions.

Our partner, the [Communities Housing Trust](#), is the leading community-led housing charity operating over the north of Scotland. They are in frequent contact with Scottish Government funding bodies and other grant awarding organisations such as the National Lottery. We benefit so much from having their knowledge and expertise at our side.

## Recently asked questions

*Q. What is cohousing?*

A. Cohousing projects are developed and run by their members. Residents look out for each other, enjoy shared activities and common spaces and have their own self-contained homes. Cohousing communities often emphasise sustainability and ecological design. They may be multi-generational or focus on specific groups such as older people.

*Q. Who can apply for a HCH home?*

A. Older people (normally over 60) who:

- are committed to sharing in the development and management of the cohousing community
- are currently living (housed or unhoused) in Orkney **or**
- have immediate family resident in Orkney **or**
- have formerly been permanent and primarily resident in Orkney.

*Q. How much money needs to be raised?*

A. The tendered cost for the whole project i.e. six homes and common space for socialising and shared amenities, groundworks, road, parking, is £1.5m. Housing grants and loans will largely support the houses, with a shortfall of £225,000: roughly the cost of one house in the scheme. The cost of the common space, central to the cohousing model, is estimated at £75,000. It is not covered by housing grants. So we need to raise £300,000.



*Q. How are you raising funds?*

A. HCH has already raised £21,000 in grants and pledges for the common space. Seeking out and applying for grants for this is a regular part of our work – and there are some applications in the pipeline.

The Communities Housing Trust is applying for larger grants as they open; exploring different mortgage options and working with the Islands Housing Fund for the rest of the build.

Look out for our next newsletter in Spring 2025. If you have any questions or comments, please get in touch, by Facebook, or via the [website](#) or email us at [info.hopecohousing@gmail.com](mailto:info.hopecohousing@gmail.com)



With best wishes to you all for Christmas and the New Year!