



# Hope Cohousing Newsletter

September 2025

## On the move

The Hope Cohousing team has been on the move this summer. We held our monthly open meeting in Stromness in June and in Kirkwall in July, while in August we were at the South Ronaldsay and Burray show. We were delighted to see both familiar and new faces on each occasion. Thank you to all of you who came along.



Congratulations to Jean Dickens who had the winning ticket in our Name the Hen draw at the Hope Show. Jean chose Wilma as the hen's name. Wilma is now happily rehomed in Burray. Rosemary Moon was the runner up with Doris and went home with the consolation prize. Many of you will have noticed that our Hope Cohousing logo features a hen.

## Friends

We are looking to launch the Friends of Cohousing in Orkney in the coming months. A number of people have already signed up at the events over the summer. Its focus will be to promote and support both the Hope Cohousing development and other cohousing initiatives in Orkney that people might want to set up. If you would like to be involved do get in touch.

## Raising funds

As many readers will know, the project will create six new, eco-aware, affordable rental homes for people wanting to live independently and build a supportive community. It will be Scotland's first cohousing project and the first fully rental cohousing development in the UK.



We are working with our partner, the Communities Housing Trust, to put together the funding package for the build. Currently we are in the process of applying for large grants towards construction costs. This includes making submissions to SSEN – familiar to us in Orkney where work for the new interconnector to Scotland and associated installations is underway – and the Islands Housing Fund – recently given a two-year extension by the Scottish Government.

Grant applicants are asked to attach letters of support for the project from their local community. We are collecting as many letters as we can. If you would like to add your support for Hope Cohousing or for cohousing in Orkney more generally, it would be hugely appreciated. Please send any letters to us at [info.hopecohousing@gmail.com](mailto:info.hopecohousing@gmail.com).

In our partnership governance model, the Communities Housing Trust will own the building and have overall responsibility for its operation and allocating properties. Hope Cohousing will be responsible for day-to-day management of the development.

## In the news

Over the summer we have featured in some media stories, with an article in Orkney News, mentions in Ariane Burgess' column in The Orcadian and in a Scottish Housing News podcast. Tom Morton, Convenor of Cohousing Scotland and Hope Cohousing's Jenny Rambridge explore various aspects of cohousing in the podcast. Click on the link below to hear their discussion.



Our website continues to grow in popularity. It has had over 10,000 visits in the last three months with 42,000 pages being accessed. Most of this traffic comes from UK but there is a good number of visitors from USA and other countries.

## Scottish Government housing policy

When Màiri McAllan was appointed in June to the new post of Cabinet Secretary for Housing in the Scottish Government, we wrote to remind her of her predecessor's undertaking to support

the establishment of cohousing as an option alongside other models of housing provision. In her answer she said:

*... the Scottish Government is supportive of community-led housing, including co-housing models... I am aware that co-housing was raised*



*during committee discussions on the Housing Bill and that the Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice committed to producing guidance. I am in the process of engaging with relevant MSPs across the broad range of issues raised in relation to the Housing Bill including the matter of co-housing.*

Màiri McAllan has since announced a *Housing Emergency Action Plan* for Scotland (September 3, 2025). She made a commitment to invest up to £4.9bn which could deliver around 36,000 affordable homes by 2029-30 (9,000 pa). While being a step forward, it falls short of what recent research shows is actually needed – 15,000 social and affordable homes per year. That adds up to roughly 60 such homes each year for Orkney. There are links in the news section of our website to the action plan and the research.

## Back to work

Over the summer and in the wonderful weather we've had in Orkney, we have of course been enjoying visits from friends and getting out and about. Now it's September and time to refocus and resume the serious work of getting the Hope Cohousing project built.

Thank you for your continuing interest – and please do send us a letter of support if you can.