

Things to consider when starting a Community Led Housing Project



Community led housing is where people come together to play a leading role in developing and managing homes. There are many different models and approaches, however the most important thing is that there is a group of enthusiastic people with a shared vision.

You may decide to join an existing group or start a new one. Below are some tips on where to start:

Forming a Group

When you first consider starting a community led housing project, you will need to find a group of interested people to take the project forward.

- Reach out to neighbours, colleagues, friends or family and see who may be interested in joining you.
- Put an advert in the local newspaper or ask people to add a call out in their newsletters.
- Join online forums and groups to see if there are other interested people nearby.

Joining a Group

There may be groups who share the same values as you and are looking for new members. You can see if there is an emerging group near you on our online projects map and reach out to them directly.

Researching other Projects

There are some great community-led housing projects to be inspired by. Although each project is unique, it's useful to read case studies and learn from others' experiences.

Residents and Members

People come to community led housing for many reasons. You may be looking to live together as a group of people and make decisions collectively about your homes. Or you may come together as local people who want a role in the provision of homes in your neighbourhood. This is one of the first decisions you'll make as a group and it will determine how you govern the organisation.

To help navigate this, ask yourselves:

- Who will live in the homes?
- Who can make decisions about the homes?

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Establishing a Vision and drafting a Vision Statement

Establishing a shared vision will help to define your group's purpose and communicate with potential partners and investors. It will also help you make decisions as it becomes clear what your priorities are and where compromises can be made.

Talk about money

Speaking about money can be difficult, particularly with friends or people you are just getting to know. People may have different levels of income and savings, and they may need different levels of savings to feel secure or have different attitudes towards risk and spending.

It is important however, to collectively define what 'affordability' means for your project and it should be included in your vision statement.

Prioritise your objectives

When establishing your objectives there is a balance to be found between being too flexible or too specific. As a group, it's a good idea to arrange your initial ideas into two categories:

- **must-haves** - things that must be achieved to make the project worth doing and will not be negotiated on
- **nice-to-haves** - things that your group could compromise on

Document and Share

Once you have a vision which is concise, easy to follow and agreed by everyone, you can think about making it available for potential members, funders and partners.

This could be a simple document you email out, or you could use a free website builder to share your vision online.

CONTACT LAURA ATKINSON at Eastern Community Homes

for more detailed guidance and advice from the hub.

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