

Questions and answers from the 'Meet and greet', 14/6/21.

This zoom meeting was open to anyone interested, and 7 people attended.

### **How and when can we be involved –**

There is a special zoom meeting on the 21/6/21 at 7pm to give more details on how to be involved and be a member. There are three tiers of membership with details on our website.

### **What is the price range of houses ?**

Our target for a 3 bedroom house is £130-£140k. There will be a range of house sizes including from 1-4 bed. That price includes a share of the communal areas and the communal house. Also note that we will be building to close to Passive House standard so these are houses that will have low heating costs.

### **How does consensus decision making work in practice –**

We practice decision making aiming for consensus by using rounds. The practice of rounds is simple: by default, we speak one by one until everyone has spoken once. Then we start again. Rounds are a manifestation of the principle that everyone's voice matters. Rounds focus us because every round will have a prompt. That way, at any given point in time, we know what we are talking about, and, even though they may seem lengthy in time, they tend to save time overall.

1. The proposal is presented (usually following previous discussion of the issues involved, so that the proposal is not a surprise, something out of the blue)
- 2. Round of clarifying questions:** Does everyone understand the proposal — "are there any questions or clarifications?"
3. These are answered by the proposer(s). They can also say 'I don't know the answer to that - let's go and think about it'.
- 4. Round of quick reactions:** for everyone to give their (brief) reactions or suggested amendments to the proposal
- 5. Round of objections or concerns:** We can ask "Are there any objections at this stage?" An objection should be presented as a reasoned argument so everyone understands it. If not, then we move to give [consent][consensus]. If there are reasoned objections, see note below.

**6. Round of consent:** to hear everyone's consent. Is it good enough for now / safe enough to try? If there are objections at this stage, the facilitator may ask the objectors to work with the proposer to bring back a new proposal

### **What is the financial commitment ?**

For people to join the group there is no commitment.

Once someone becomes a full member there is a non-refundable deposit of £1,000. This entitles them to a plot on the site.

During the design phase we will incur costs beyond what can be covered by the deposits, in particular architects fees, solicitors fees and the costs for various other reports and surveys that are required by the planning process. These will be met either by loans from members or from a commercial loan.

Once construction starts on their house there will be a construction deposit. We have not worked out the details of this but typically it would be 10% of the build cost.

Once their houses have been completed then they can be mortgaged or paid off in full to repay the build costs.

When residents move in then there will be running costs to manage the site and the communal house, just like there would be if you owned a flat in a block. However the difference in cohousing is that the residents will own the management company and so have control of those costs. We anticipate that the running costs will be moderate because most of the maintenance of the site will be done by ourselves.