

NOVEMBER  
2021

# MORRELL HOUSE

## PROSPECTUS

SHEFFIELD UNIVERSITY  
LIVE PROJECT

SCAN FOR A LINK  
TO THE OPHOUSE  
WEBSITE



## Contents

|    |                                 |
|----|---------------------------------|
| 3  | Table of contents               |
| 4  | What are tiny homes?            |
| 8  | What is Morrell House           |
| 10 | York Design week                |
| 12 | How to start a co-housing model |
| 14 | Examples of co-housing          |
| 24 | Find out more on co-housing     |
| 26 | Glossary                        |

## What is this booklet for?

This short booklet will explain to you what co-housing is, why it is relevant in today's context and how co-housing principles could be applied to Morrell House in York.

This booklet also contains a collection of co-housing projects from the UK & abroad, to showcase the success stories from other co-housing communities.

By collating this information together we hope to offer a better understanding of co-housing and other related theories such as tiny homes, community lead design and self build.

# Live...

# What is Co-Housing?

# Why is it important?

Co-housing is an intentional **community** of homes clustered around a shared space.

Co-housing values are typically centered around working together as a community to **benefit everyone**, and working towards a shared idea.

Through team work and a shared vision between residents, co-housing communities have been proven to be **resilient, positive & sustainable** neighborhoods.

The co-housing idea is already an established model in Denmark, the Netherlands, Germany & US, but is becoming increasingly popular in the UK



# How much space do we need?

# What are tiny homes?

## How to apply 'Tiny Homes' to your home?

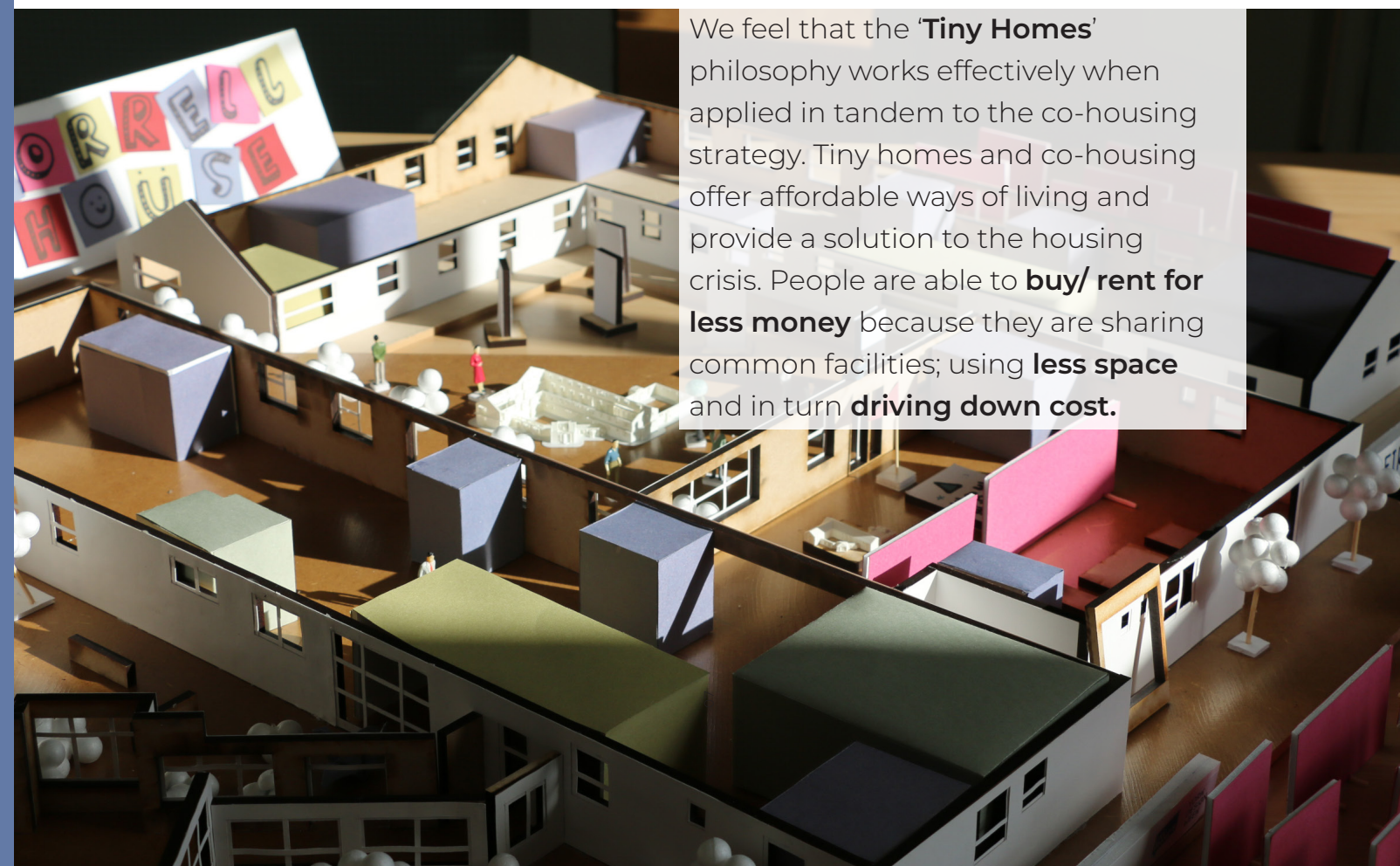
- Think about how much space you have?
- Think about how much space you need?
- Can you get more creative with storage?
- Can you get more creative with the furniture you have?

Co-housing schemes have the potential to work well with the '**Tiny Homes**' movement. Many people believe that a larger home means a better home, however research suggests that this is not always the case.

If the space you live in is simply designed 'well' and makes **better use of the space already available** to you, your home can provide the same level of comfort as a large house.

For instance, being more **creative with storage** and flexible furnitures can allow your one bedroom flat to feel more spacious.

We feel that the '**Tiny Homes**' philosophy works effectively when applied in tandem to the co-housing strategy. Tiny homes and co-housing offer affordable ways of living and provide a solution to the housing crisis. People are able to **buy/ rent for less money** because they are sharing common facilities; using **less space** and in turn **driving down cost**.





# What is Morrell House?

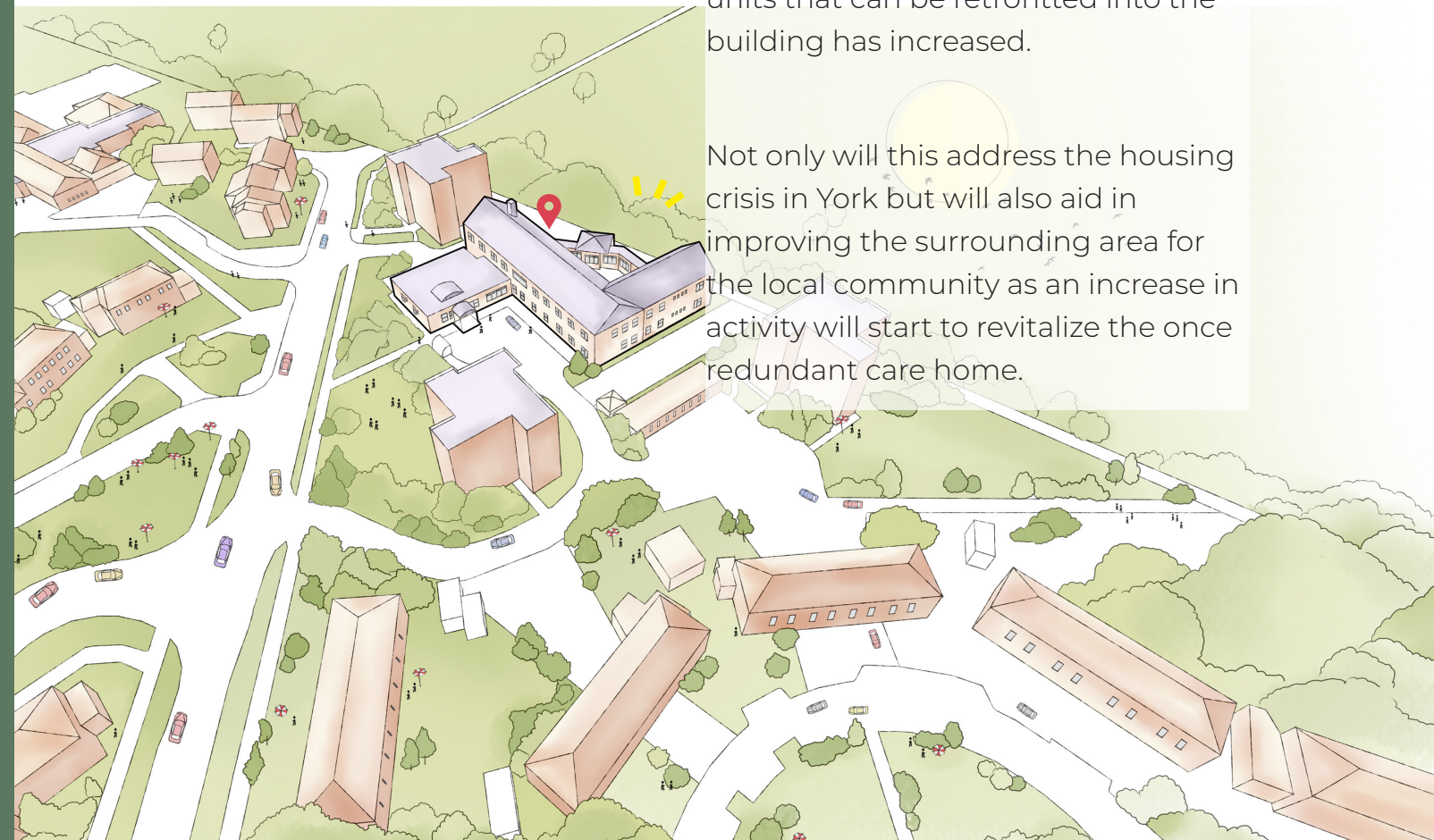
## How can Co-Housing & Tiny Homes benefit the building?

**Morrell House** (located in Clifton, York) is a former council owned care home, which has sadly been left vacant since 2017.

**Ophouse** (a people centric collective with a focus on addressing the affordable housing crisis in the UK) have seen a potential in the empty building to be transformed into **affordable homes** (something the city of York is desperate need of).

By applying co-housing principles like **community lead design**, **affordable rent** and **shared services** with **'Tiny Home'** philosophies like down sizing and reduced spatial design the number of possible residential units that can be retrofitted into the building has increased.

Not only will this address the housing crisis in York but will also aid in improving the surrounding area for the local community as an increase in activity will start to revitalize the once redundant care home.



# York design week...

# What has it taught us?

**Sheffield University** students conducted research at York Design Week to better understand the local situation surrounding Morrell House.

Over 4 days students engaged with members of the public through an **interactive exhibition**. Model making & drawing were used as tools to start conversations with people and build a picture of the what the neighbourhood wants to see from the Morrell House project.

Conversations with the local people and potential residents saw a wide variety of ideas. It was clear a community lead approach to residential design was well received.

Potential residents and the local community saw the value in shared amenity space both financially & socially.

York Design Week engagement was a success in creating public discussion around co-housing and the future reuse of Morrell House.





# How can a co-housing model start?

## What are the first steps?

### Step 01

Identify a building or area of land that could be used. This could vary from an **existing building** to a **brown field site** (an area of land that has been left unused since the exit of industry).

### Step 02

**Engage** with the community that is already there. Build an understanding of what co-housing is and how it will benefit the local community as well as the future residents. Try to explain that you are keen to aid the area in a positive way. We found that at Morrell House people are very supportive of the proposal happening especially if it can **benefit the immediate community**. The proposal for Morrell House includes a community cafe which will provide social space for the wider community.

### Step 03

Start to find people who would want to be a part of the co-housing scheme. It is beneficial if the future residents have a range of skills between them as this will result in a stronger and more resilient community starting to form. In self-build communities DIY skills are beneficial in the initial stages but all are welcome!



# Are there any examples of successful Co-Housing schemes?

**Co-housing** has seen high levels of success in the Netherlands, Germany & US, but they are more common than one might think. There are already some exciting and sustainable co-housing projects in the UK!

## We have some examples for you...

The following pages show you some great co-housing schemes. All of which are visually different to one another but share similar core principles

- Self build
- Community
- Affordability
- Sustainability





# LILAC

(Low impact Living Affordable Community)

LEEDS , UK  
20 ECO-HOMES

## Description:

5 housing blocks and a common house organised around a courtyard with green spaces including a pond, allotments and playgrounds. The houses are prefabricated and designed to be energy efficient, reducing the residents bills. There is a small car park on the outskirts of the site to encourage car sharing.

## Motivation:

The idea began with five Leeds residents wanting to build their own homes and looking for a new way to live and bring up their children.



## How has it helped the community?

- Residents share common facilities like laundry & guest rooms to reduce cost.
- Residents have two meals a week together to improve community and aid in a sense of belonging.
- Each resident owns a stake in the development rather than owning their individual home to continue a shared idea of working together.





## Copper Lane

LONDON, UK  
SIX FAMILY HOMES

### Description:

Based in Stoke Newington and completed in 2014, the scheme sees six houses ranging in size from 70 to 165 sqm arranged around a courtyard with communal spaces underneath. Shared spaces include a laundry room, workshop, hall and gardens which aims to save space in each home and engage with the wider community.

### Motivation:

A non-profit company limited by guarantee was formed by the founding members of the group. They originally came together to share and do things collectively such as washing and gardening.

### How has it helped the community?

- Residents have security as individual homes are owned on a 999 year lease.
- Residents meet monthly to engage in collective business.
- Residents could obtain mortgages through Ecology Building Society.







## Mariposa Grove

NORTH OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA  
4 BUILDINGS, 8 APARTMENTS,  
16 RESIDENTS

### Description:

16 residents, 8 apartments and a common, house across 4 buildings, with a garden where kids can play and residents can socialize. The common house has guest rooms, an art room, a play room, office space and a large kitchen + lounge space.

### Motivation:

Mariposa Grove was set up by a German man who had lived in student accommodation in Berlin, upon moving to America he wanted to recreate this communal way of living. He bought two houses and built a third house in the back garden. The residents of Mariposa Grove, past and present, are creatives who were looking for a way of life that was affordable to allow them flexibility and time to spend practicing their arts rather than working constantly.

### How has it helped the community?

- Food cooperative set up to bulk buy food and sell it to others in the neighborhood.
- Photography classes to up skill residents & bond.
- Meals together twice a week to improve togetherness.
- Bike campaign to reduce car usage and to limit their carbon footprint.





## Trelay Farm co-housing

ESTABLISHED 2007 CORNWALL, UK  
12 HOMES

### Description:

The farm has several existing buildings which have been converted as well as some new build homes. The main farm-house is used as a common house with a kitchen, dining room, laundry room, games room and other amenities. They have a barn which they use for a workshop, craft room and farm shop. The existing buildings have been renovated to a high standard to keep them in use.

### Motivation:

Trelay was set up by friends and friends of friends, their aim was to create an eco-community. In 2007 they bought a farm with several buildings and fields as well as planning permission for more buildings. The farm cost £1.8 million and was bought with money from the sale of some of the residents previous homes and a mortgage of £880k. Residents looking to join the co-housing scheme without any existing capital had to buy a share in the mortgage.

### How has it helped the community?

- Culture of sharing & caring for one another eg. Passing on children's clothes or offering child care services.
- Car share scheme to reduce carbon footprint.
- Mutual home ownership scheme to entrench the shared vision of community and provide long term resilience.



# How can I find out more information on co-housing in the UK?

## UK CoHousing Network

### What is it?

The UK Cohousing Network is a membership organisation 'with a mission to enable communities to use cohousing principles to create better places to live by reducing isolation & loneliness, and by sharing facilities and services to reduce living cost'.

Their website is a great resource to view other co-housing schemes in the UK and to get in contact with people already part of a co-housing scheme.

### If you would like to know more...

If you would like to learn more about co-housing in the UK or get involved with other like minded people, visit the UK co-housing Network at **[cohousing.org.uk](https://cohousing.org.uk)**



# Glossary

## Key Terms that are handy to know...

### Co-Housing-

An intentional community of private homes clustered around shared space. Each home has traditional amenities. The communal spaces often include things such as a larger kitchen, laundry rooms and recreational spaces. Living in co-housing promotes the idea of sharing resources with your neighbours and helping care for elderly neighbours or each others children.

### Housing Co-Operatives -

A not for profit organisation. Set up by residents to buy buildings or land to build on. Each resident is a shareholder in the Co-Operative, with shares equating to the size of their property. Housing co-operatives are a cheaper way to buy homes as they do not make a profit.

### Community Land Trust (CLT)-

a not for profit organisation, made up of members of the community. CLT's allow communities to bring buildings they care about back into use or to protect buildings and services. The land or building is often gifted or bought by the community, the CLT employs an Architect and/or contractor to produce affordable housing. The CLT continue to look after the buildings and ensure that they remain affordable.

### Self-help housing-

Focuses on refurbishing empty buildings rather than building from scratch. In some cases the buildings are bought by the residents but they are often leased on a long lease by a housing co-operative (local authority or housing association). The co-operative is non profit so the rent is kept low. The residents then renovate the property, doing most of the work themselves.

### Housing Association-

A not for profit or organisation that owns, let and manage property to provide affordable housing. Generally cheaper than private rental and with longer tenancies. The accommodation they provide is often referred to as "Social housing".

### Community lead development (CLD)

Is the process of working together to create & achieve locally owned visions & goals.

OpHouse  
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ophouse.co.uk



# LIVE, BUILD, PLAY