

# Affordable Co-housing for Retirement



WHY DO THIS?

## Reasons

- For ourselves
- To develop a place that is affordable
- To respond to the changing demographic “Baby Boomers”

# Loneliness

*Research shows that loneliness and social isolation are harmful to our health: lacking social connections is a comparable risk factor for early death as smoking 15 cigarettes a day, and is worse for us than well-known risk factors such as obesity and physical inactivity.*

Nov 1, 2017 <https://www.campaigntoendloneliness.org/about-loneliness>

# Changing Demographics

By 2030, when the first baby boomers reach 84, the number of Americans over 65 will have grown by 75% to 69 million. That means more than 20% of the population will be over 65, compared with only 13% today. More than 35% will be over 50.

Can we Wait for Governments to Respond?

**NO!**

# Options for Retirement Housing

- Naturally Occurring Senior Residence
- Homesharing
- Buying an existing apartment block as co-housing
- Building a co-housing community
- Buying a large home for co-housing

# Building

[www.oldgracehousingcoop.ca/](http://www.oldgracehousingcoop.ca/)

<https://cohousing.ca/about-cohousing/senior-cohousing/>

[www.communityledhomes.org.uk/how-do-it](http://www.communityledhomes.org.uk/how-do-it)

[Facebook: Senior Women Cohousing](#)





# WHIM (Women's Housing Initiative Manitoba)

# Criteria For Large Home

- At least 6 good sized bedrooms
- Common rooms for women to share
- Projected costs affordable
- Parking
- Within walking distance to stores
- Place to walk
- At least 3 bathrooms
- Amenities like balconies

# Criteria for Residents

Women

Middle aged to older (approx. 50 +)

Interested in living in a respectful and supportive environment

Interested in expanding their minds, contributing to the community at large in meaningful way and having fun.

# Let's talk about how to do this. What do you want?

- What groups do you want to include? Older women, all ages, men and women, couples?
- Do you want to live in the city, close to amenities? Or in the country?
- Do you want classy or affordable?
- Do you want to have individual suites or shared housing?
- Do you want to buy, build or renovate?

# Principles

- Support respect and equality for all
- Willing to help others
- Able to resolve conflict in a respectful manner
- Support environmental measures like recycling
- Open to kids and family who visit
- Non-smoker

# Organizational Structure

- Can be a “business” owned by one individual and costs shared
- Partnership between residents
- An incorporated entity with one or more residents as owners
- An incorporated Co-operative with equal shares by all

# Details

- Banking
- Getting a mortgage
- Zoning
- Insurance

# People

- Finding People
- Choosing people
- Contracts
- Policies



# Working Together



# Tasks

- Occasional Tasks
- Ongoing Tasks



# Monthly Finances

Operating expenses - includes everything but food  
4295 (for 6 people)

Total Income – \$4700. Rooms vary from \$650 to \$950

Contingency fund – any extra

# Food

Taking turns. One night a week.

\$50 a week into the food fund

Maintaining positive relationships. What are the keys?

1. People have outside interests, not dependent on roomies for entertainment.
2. Regular meetings
3. Develop policies and new policies as issues arise.
4. Deal with differences when they happen and directly with the person.

# Having Fun Together!





# Having Fun Together!



# Events

- Murder Mystery Party
- New Years Dinner
- Womens March





# Advantages

- It's cheaper
- Great dinners.
- Privacy when you want it; company when you want it
- Learn new things
- Everything taken care of if you travel
- Housekeeper and lawn service
- Help when your ill or incapacitated

# Disadvantages

- Need to be flexible/no “one right way”
- Need to deal with differences
- Need to downsize. Can't accommodate everyone's stuff

# Is it Worth It?

- Yes because...

# Supportive Environment

- *Friendship* is a lot like food. We need it to survive. ...Psychologists find that human beings have fundamental need for inclusion in group life and for close relationships. We are truly social animals. The upshot is, we function best when this social need is met. It is easier to stay motivated, to meet the varied challenges of life.

Psychology Today 2016

# The Future

This can be done.

We can create our own vision of what we want  
– cheaper and more in line with our values and  
our needs as we grow older and wiser