CohoUsing handBook

Building Communities

Cohousilience

Forward-looking EU



Cohousilience

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I- Introduction and context

Building Resilient Communities through Cohousing

Imagine a place where doors are open to encounter, where collaboration overcomes isolation, and where shared spaces become the heart of a living community. This is the spirit of cohousing, a new way of living that not only responds to practical housing needs, but also redefines what it means to live together in a diverse, sustainable and interconnected world.

At a time when cities are facing challenges such as an ageing population, social exclusion and the housing crisis, cohousing emerges as a courageous and creative response. More than a housing model, it is a movement that inspires new ways of thinking about home, community and mutual care. It is a space where people become protagonists of their lives and architects of their environments, building not just physical structures, but strong and resilient relationships.

This guide is designed to inspire and support all individuals and organisations interested in cohousing:

- **Future residents** who dream of being part of a community where collaboration is the driving force of daily life.
- **Community leaders** seeking tools to facilitate coexistence, mediate conflicts and guide communities towards a sustainable future.
- **Public administrations and local actors** who see cohousing as an opportunity to transform neighbourhoods and promote social inclusion.

Through real-life experiences, practical advice and in-depth reflections, this guide invites you to explore the transformative potential of cohousing. You will learn how these spaces are built from scratch, how social dynamics are managed in a shared environment and how this model can be adapted to different contexts, from rural areas to densely populated cities.

Why should you read this guide?

Because cohousing is not just an innovative model; it is an act of resistance in the face of social disconnection and fragmentation. It is a declaration that it is possible to build a future where community is at the centre. Throughout these pages, you will discover how people across Europe have worked together to create homes that not only meet their needs, but also celebrate their diversity and strengthen their sense of belonging.

A journey towards collaboration and sustainability

This guide is full of real stories and learnings from projects in Italy, France, Belgium and beyond. Each experience shared here is a window into the possibilities of cohousing: communities that are not only environmentally sustainable, but also address social sustainability by putting values such as equity, participation and mutual support at the centre.

Whether you are a dreamer looking for inspiration, a technician developing projects or a civil servant exploring new policies, this guide will provide you with a framework, practical tools and, most importantly, a reminder that solutions to big challenges always start with a willingness to imagine something different.

Your role in this change

Cohousing is not only for those looking for a home; it is also an invitation to build communities with purpose. This model is only possible thanks to the collaboration of many voices: neighbours, associations, architects, administrations and community leaders. Therefore, this guide is not a closed manual, but an open conversation that we hope you will expand with your own ideas and experiences.

Explore these pages with curiosity and openness. Imagine how this model could transform you, your community and your environment. From first ideas to implementing cohousing, this is a resource for all those who believe that living together can be more than just sharing a space: it can be sharing a purpose.

Welcome to this adventure towards collaboration, sustainability and community power!

What is cohousing?

Cohousing is more than a housing solution; it is a philosophy of life that places people and relationships at the centre of the space they inhabit. It is a way of designing, building and managing communities that goes beyond simply sharing a place to live: it is about creating environments where cooperation, sustainability and mutual support become the pillars of coexistence.

One idea, multiple forms

There is no single model of cohousing. In some cases, it may be a group of families who decide to build together a shared space with private and common areas. In others, an organisation adapts an abandoned building into a collective home that fosters the social integration of older people, migrants or young people. It can also be a rural community that creates a self-sufficient environment, where daily life is organised around values such as permaculture and circular economy.

This diversity of approaches is one of the greatest strengths of cohousing. Depending on the context, cohousing can focus on specific needs: serving older people who wish to maintain their autonomy, offering young families an affordable alternative to raise their children, or creating intergenerational spaces where collaboration enriches everyone's life. Each cohousing community responds to its own reality, adapting to the place, the people and the opportunities that surround it.

A model that transforms lives

In cohousing, houses are not mere enclosed spaces: they are part of a larger ecosystem that integrates common areas such as shared kitchens, collective gardens, rooms for recreational activities or even community services such as nurseries, gyms or workshops. These spaces are designed to foster interaction, coexistence and a sense of belonging, allowing residents to share not only material resources, but also experiences and learning.

Cohousing also transforms relationships. Instead of living in isolation, people become an active part of a support network that facilitates everyday life: sharing childcare, organising cultural activities, supporting each other in times of difficulty or simply enjoying a coffee in the communal garden. This model

helps to combat social isolation, fosters solidarity and strengthens the fabric of the community.

Diversity as a driver of change

Cohousing also reflects the richness of human diversity. Many communities bring together people of different ages, cultures, abilities and life paths. This diversity not only enriches the experience of the residents, but also strengthens the resilience of the community. In cohousing, differences are not barriers, but opportunities to learn, collaborate and grow together.

In urban contexts, cohousing can be an answer to the challenges of access to housing and loneliness that many people face. In rural areas, it can revitalise declining villages, attracting new residents and creating more vibrant local economies. In both cases, the model has the power to transform physical and social environments, promoting a deeper and more enduring sense of community.

A path to sustainability

Cohousing is also a tool for moving towards a more sustainable future. Many communities adopt environmentally friendly practices, from energy efficient construction to the creation of shared gardens or collective recycling systems. These practices not only reduce the environmental footprint, but also promote a more conscious relationship with resources and the environment.

Moreover, cohousing challenges the traditional dynamics of ownership and consumption. Models that separate land ownership from housing, ensuring long-term affordability and avoiding property speculation. These approaches offer an alternative to the traditional housing market, promoting fair and equitable access.

An evolving model

Cohousing is not a static concept; it is constantly evolving. As new challenges arise, such as digitalisation, climate change or economic crises, cohousing communities experiment and adapt, finding new ways to respond to the needs of their residents. From integrating smart technologies for resource management to creating fully self-sufficient communities, cohousing continues to demonstrate its ability to innovate and lead change.

An invitation to imagine the possible

Cohousing is not just a housing model; it is a way of questioning how we live, how we relate and how we build the future. It invites us to imagine possibilities beyond the walls of our home, to think about how we can share, collaborate and care for each other. Whether in a small town or a big city, in a refurbished building or a new project, cohousing shows that living together can be more than just sharing a space: it can be sharing a purpose.

This diversity of forms and approaches makes cohousing a powerful tool for responding to today's challenges, but also a source of inspiration for those seeking a new way of inhabiting the world. This guide is a starting point for exploring that vision: a place where community is not just an ideal, but a tangible reality that transforms lives and societies.

What is Cohousilience?

Cohousilience is a European project that arises from the need to rethink how we inhabit our spaces and how we build more resilient, inclusive and sustainable communities. Inspired by the principles of cohousing, this project aims to develop innovative models of cohabitation that respond to the social, economic and environmental challenges we face today.

With a duration of 30 months and funded by the Erasmus+ programme, Cohousilience brings together organisations from several European countries to design, implement and evaluate cohousing experiences in different contexts. More than an architectural or social experiment, it is a collaborative effort that seeks to promote inclusion, strengthen the community fabric and generate learning that can be replicated across Europe.

The project aims not only to create shared physical spaces, but also to develop tools, capacities and conceptual frameworks that enable local communities and actors to implement their own cohousing initiatives. This includes the creation of community hubs, the development of an app that connects cohousing communities and training programmes for community leaders and educators.

The vision of Cohousilience

Cohousilience is based on a simple but powerful premise: solutions to today's problems must come from the community. At a time when social exclusion, isolation and housing crises affect millions of people, this project presents itself as a model that puts people at the centre. It promotes collaboration over individuality, inclusion over exclusion and sustainability over excessive consumption.

The challenges of Cohousilience

While cohousing has great transformative potential, it also faces significant challenges that Cohousilience seeks to address directly. These are some of the key challenges:

1. **Lack of knowledge and awareness**
   Despite its benefits, cohousing remains an unknown or misunderstood concept in many contexts. Many people associate cohousing with a loss of privacy or with alternative living patterns that are difficult to apply on

a day-to-day basis. Cohousilience seeks to bust these myths through awareness-raising campaigns, educational materials and practical experiences that demonstrate the viability and positive impact of the model.

2. **Access to finance and resources**
   One of the biggest challenges for communities wishing to initiate cohousing projects is the lack of access to affordable and sustained funding. Cohousilience works to explore innovative financing models, such as *Community Land Trusts*, and to promote partnerships between the public, private and community sectors to ensure the financial sustainability of these projects.

3. **Diversity of needs and contexts**
   Cohousing communities are not homogeneous. The challenges they face vary according to the target group (elderly people, young people, single-parent families, migrants, etc.), as well as the urban or rural context in which they are located. Cohousilience is committed to a flexible approach that allows cohousing models to be adapted to the specific needs of each place and group.

4. **Challenges in coexistence and community management**
   Living in community can be an enriching experience, but it also poses challenges, such as conflict management, collective decision-making and day-to-day organisation. Cohousilience places special emphasis on the training of community leaders and the development of tools that facilitate participatory governance, mediation and the building of strong relationships between members.

5. **Legal and regulatory barriers**
   In many countries, land and property regulations hinder the implementation of innovative models such as cohousing. Cohousilience seeks to identify and overcome these barriers by developing legal frameworks and public policies that support the growth of cohousing as a legitimate and accessible option.

6. **Social and environmental impact**
   Cohousilience faces the challenge of demonstrating that cohousing not only has a positive impact on the people who live there, but also on the surrounding community and environment. This means developing projects that are not only inclusive and sustainable, but also become benchmarks to inspire change on a larger scale.

Cohousilience: An opportunity for transformation

Despite these challenges, Cohousilience is a unique opportunity to

demonstrate that another model of housing is possible. By connecting people, organisations and administrations across Europe, the project is not just looking for one-off solutions, but aims to create a movement that transforms how we think about housing and community.

This initiative invites everyone - co-housers, community leaders, technicians, public administrations and citizens in general - to imagine and build together a future where access to decent housing, living together in solidarity and sustainability are achievable realities. Cohousilience does not only propose an alternative living model; it offers a roadmap towards a fairer, more inclusive and resilient Europe.

Who are we?

FAI Padova (Italy)

FAI Padova is a social cooperative based in Padua, specialised in elderly care and in the implementation of innovative housing models. Its work focuses on promoting social inclusion, autonomy and active ageing, integrating care and support services in community settings.

FAI Padova is the **project leader**, responsible for the overall coordination and supervision of all activities. His main responsibilities include:

- **Project management**: Ensure the smooth implementation of all phases and activities in collaboration with partners.
- **Pilot development**: Leading initiatives such as *Casa GAIA* in Padua, a replicable cohousing model that integrates community services such as gym, clinic and creative spaces.
- **Technological innovation**: Coordinate the creation of the *Cohousing Community APP* to connect communities and facilitate collaborative management.

FAI Padova brings its consolidated experience in cohousing and sustainability models, leading with its holistic and integrative vision.

Associazione Atypica (Italy)

Atypica is a social cooperative based in Turin that promotes models of citizen participation, social innovation and inclusive coexistence. Its approach combines creative methodologies, co-design and management of community dynamics.

Atypica is responsible for the **development and design of pilot projects in Italy**, implementing participatory strategies and fostering social cohesion. Its main contributions include:

- **Co-creation and community design**: Facilitating workshops for future residents to actively participate in the planning of spaces and services.
- **Management of social dynamics**: To introduce tools for conflict resolution and community self-management, guaranteeing harmonious coexistence.
- **Inclusive approach**: Designing housing solutions adapted to diverse groups, such as youth, families and older people.

Atypica stands out for its ability to strengthen community ties through creativity and innovation.

Community Land Trust Brussels (CLTB) (Belgium)

CLTB is a non-profit organisation leading the implementation of the *Community Land Trust* model in Europe. Its focus is on ensuring long-term housing affordability through the separation of land and building ownership.
CLTB leads on key issues related to **economic sustainability and governance**. Its responsibilities include:

- **Financing models**: Develop strategies to ensure the financial viability of cohousing through innovative ownership and financing schemes.
- **Impact evaluation**: Monitor and analyse the results of the pilots to identify good practices and lessons learned.
- **Strengthening community governance**: Designing participatory structures that enable residents to manage their communities effectively.

CLTB brings solid experience in economic management and collective ownership, key to the success of the project.

Association Caracol (France)

Caracol

colocation mixte et solidaire

Caracol is a French association focused on the creation of multicultural shared housing, especially for people in vulnerable situations, such as migrants and refugees. Its work combines social inclusion, space rehabilitation and community revitalisation.

Caracol leads activities related to **social and cultural integration** within cohousing communities. Its main contributions include:

- **Design of intercultural spaces**: Implement strategies that promote coexistence between people from different cultures and generations.
- **Comprehensive support**: Develop programmes for cultural mediation, conflict resolution and strengthening social cohesion.
- **Housing rehabilitation**: Transforming disused buildings into functional living spaces adapted to the needs of the residents.

Caracol's experience in intercultural inclusion reinforces the project's commitment to diversity and equity.

Consorcio Andaluz de Impulso Social (CAIS) (Spain)

CAIS is a CONSORCIO ANDALUZ DE IMPULSO SOCIAL Spanish cooperative specialising in social project management, team building and strategy development for third sector organisations. Its focus is on institutional strengthening and social innovation.

CAIS leads the **formation and economic sustainability** of the pilot projects. Its responsibilities include:

- **Community leadership training**: Develop workshops and tools to strengthen management and leadership capacities in cohousing communities.
- **Financial planning**: Providing resources and methodologies to ensure the long-term economic viability of initiatives.
- **Technical support**: Advise on the structuring and implementation of housing projects from a social perspective.

CAIS contributes its experience in organisational strengthening, which is key to consolidating projects over time.

Odisee University (Belgium)

Odisee is a university of applied sciences in Belgium with an interdisciplinary focus on sustainability, social inclusion and practical education. It combines scientific research with the implementation of applied projects.

Odisee leads **research and impact assessment** activities. His main responsibilities include:

- **Pilot monitoring**: Evaluate the social, economic and environmental outcomes of cohousing initiatives.
- **Methodology development**: Creating practical, evidence-based frameworks to measure the success and replicability of projects.
- **Training of technical staff**: Train educators and social workers in innovative practices related to cohousing.

Odisee's contribution ensures a rigorous, data-driven approach, key to continuous project improvement.

Animam Viventem (Portugal)

Animam Viventem is a Portuguese association dedicated to psychosocial well-being, active ageing and non-formal education. They work with local communities to foster inclusion and citizen empowerment.

Animam Viventem focuses on **intergenerational participation and community revitalisation**. Its responsibilities include:

- **Active ageing**: Design programmes that enable older people to participate fully in community life.
- **Social revitalisation**: Organising cultural, educational and recreational activities to strengthen ties between residents.
- **Community support**: Encourage dynamics that favour participation and a sense of belonging in cohousing communities.

Its focus on well-being and participation enriches the human and relational dimension of the project.

MDAT (Greece)

MDAT (*Mayor Development Agency Thessaloniki*) is a Greek organisation working on issues related to social inclusion, community development and integration of migrants and refugees. Its work combines educational actions, psychosocial support and the creation of safe environments for groups at risk of exclusion.

MDAT brings expertise in the integration of migrants and the management of culturally diverse communities, a key aspect of the project's objectives. Her responsibilities include:

- **Design of inclusion strategies:** They lead activities aimed at facilitating the participation of migrants and refugees in cohousing projects. This includes adapting spaces and services to their specific needs, promoting coexistence based on equity and respect.
- **Training and awareness-raising:** MDAT develops training programmes for cohousers and community leaders, focusing on interculturality, mediation and conflict resolution. Its work ensures that communities are welcoming and functional environments for people from different backgrounds.
- **Promotion of good practices:** From its experience in Greece, MDAT collaborates in the creation of a methodological framework to integrate vulnerable groups in cohousing initiatives, sharing learning and success stories that can be applied in other European contexts.
- **Community liaison:** Act as a bridge between local migrant communities and cohousing initiatives, facilitating their active participation in community hubs and ensuring their inclusion from the early stages of the project.

Consortium strengths

1. **Diversity of approaches**: The organisations represent a wide range of European realities and contexts, which allows designing cohousing models adaptable to different needs and scenarios.
2. **Complementarity**: Each entity brings unique expertise - from economic sustainability and legal frameworks to social inclusion and scientific research - that ensures a holistic approach to project development.
3. **Collaborative innovation**: Cohousilience harnesses collective experience to explore new tools and solutions to respond to current challenges such as the housing crisis, population ageing and social exclusion.
4. **Practical approach**: Pilot projects and community hubs are living laboratories where theories are turned into action, generating concrete learning that can be replicated and scaled up.

The Cohousilience consortium combines technical expertise, social commitment and a shared vision to transform the way we think about housing and community, demonstrating that cohousing is not just a housing solution, but a catalyst for building a more inclusive, resilient and sustainable society.

What are we doing?

The **Cohousilience** project aims to transform the way we think about housing and community, generating a tangible and sustainable impact at both local and European level. The main *outcomes* of the project are described below, highlighting how each of them reflects the collaborative work and efforts made by the participating organisations.

Cohousing pilots in Europe

Five pilot projects in different EU countries (Italy, France, Belgium, Greece and Spain) are being implemented as real cohousing models, adapted to the specific characteristics and needs of each local context.

Expected impact:

- Provide affordable and sustainable housing for older people, migrants, youth and vulnerable families.
- To offer environments where collaboration and coexistence generate solutions to problems such as social exclusion and loneliness.
- Act as living laboratories to experiment and improve the cohousing model in different cultural and geographical contexts.

Each pilot is the result of a participatory design, where future residents, technicians and local actors have worked together to define spaces, services and community dynamics.

Community Hubs

The creation of five *Community Hubs*, centres for collaborative learning and community interaction, where capacity-building and empowerment activities are developed for residents and local communities.

Expected impact:

- Transform the hubs into reference points for the training of cohousers, community leaders and social agents.

- Promote social cohesion and active participation through intergenerational, cultural and recreational activities.
- Strengthen the link between cohousing communities and their immediate environment, fostering sustainable integration.

Hubs are spaces that foster inclusion and continuous learning, driven by collaboration between project entities and local actors.

Cohousing Community APP

A digital application designed specifically for cohousing communities, with functionalities that facilitate collaborative management, communication and planning of community activities.

Expected impact:

- Connecting cohousing communities with each other, creating a European network for the exchange of knowledge and experience.
- Simplify the management of shared resources, the organisation of events and collective decision-making.
- Act as a digital bridge that integrates the dynamics of community hubs and residents.

The application reflects the project's commitment to technological innovation as a tool to improve cohesion and self-management in communities.

Education and Training

Training programmes for cohousers, community leaders, social workers and educators, based on participatory and inclusive methodologies, are being carried out.

Expected impact:

- Develop competencies in leadership, conflict resolution and community governance.
- Empower people to take active roles in managing their communities.
- To equip educators and technicians with practical tools to facilitate cohousing processes in different settings.

The training is aimed at strengthening local capacities and ensuring that communities can autonomously manage their projects in the long term.

Cohousing Handbook ("Cohousilience Handbook")

A practical and accessible resource that brings together learnings, methodologies and good practices drawn from the pilots and the experiences of the project partners.

Expected impact:

- To serve as a guide for future cohousing projects in Europe and beyond.
- Provide stakeholders (residential, technical and political) with tools to plan, implement and manage cohousing communities.
- Promote the replicability and scalability of the model in various contexts.

The *handbook* is the result of a collaborative approach that brings together the collective knowledge of the consortium, with the aim of inspiring and supporting others in building resilient communities.

Impact Assessment

A detailed report analysing the social, economic and environmental results of the pilots and activities developed during the project.

Expected impact:

- Measure how cohousing improves the quality of life of residents and neighbouring communities.
- Identify barriers and opportunities for improving cohousing models in Europe.
- To provide solid data to influence public policies related to housing, social inclusion and sustainability.

Impact evaluation ensures that learning is evidence-based, enabling continuous improvement and strengthening the credibility of the model.

Recommendations for Public Policy

Concrete proposals addressed to local, regional and national administrations to facilitate the implementation of cohousing projects in Europe.

Expected impact:

- Reduce regulatory and legal barriers that hinder the development of cohousing initiatives.
- Promote public-private partnerships in the financing and management of these projects.
- Promote policies that prioritise housing as a right and not as a speculative good.

The recommendations reflect the direct experience of the partners, ensuring that they are practical, realistic and aligned with the needs of the communities.

Cohousilience *outcomes* represent not only concrete achievements, but also the basis for structural change in the way we approach housing, community and sustainability. Each outcome reflects the collective effort of the participating organisations and their commitment to building a more just, inclusive and resilient future for all.

2- How to use this guide

The **Cohousilience Handbook** is much more than a technical manual: it is an inspiring and practical guide designed to accompany different audiences on their journey towards creating and managing resilient, sustainable and inclusive communities. Whether you are a future cohouser, a community leader or a public administration representative, this document is designed to provide you with tools, ideas and learnings to maximise the impact of cohousing in your environment. Here is how the handbook can be used by each target audience:

Cohousers: Building a Home Beyond the Walls

For future residents, the handbook is an invitation to imagine a new way of living, where collaboration and coexistence are the cornerstones. It provides practical knowledge on how cohousing works, what to expect from community living and how to contribute to its success.

How to use it:

- **Learning to live together**: The guide includes sections on roles, social dynamics and collective decision-making, helping you to understand how to interact and collaborate effectively with your neighbours.
- **Prepare for self-management**: You will discover tools to manage shared spaces, organise activities and resolve conflicts constructively.
- **Explore real examples**: Through case studies, you will understand how others have overcome challenges and transformed their communities into vibrant and welcoming places.



As a cohouser, this guide will help you make the leap to a more connected and meaningful life. It will teach you that being part of a community does not mean losing your individuality, but enriching it by sharing resources, ideas and moments with others.

Community Leaders: Facilitating Coexistence and Change

For community leaders, the handbook is an indispensable resource that combines practical strategies with an inspiring vision to guide communities to their full potential. It offers tools to facilitate coexistence, resolve conflict and lead change processes with empathy and effectiveness.



How to use it:

- **Strengthen your leadership skills**: Learn about self-managed team management, participatory decision-making and conflict mediation.
- **Designing resilient communities**: Use the sections on co-design of spaces, sustainability and economic planning to create functional and sustainable environments.
- **Inspire others**: Find examples of transformative leadership in cohousing projects across Europe, which can serve as a reference for your own initiatives.

The handbook will enable you to lead from a place of knowledge and confidence. It will make you a change agent capable of transforming diverse groups into cohesive communities working together for a common purpose.

Public Administrations and Local Actors: Promoting Structural Change

For public administrations, NGOs and other local actors, the handbook is a strategic tool that demonstrates how cohousing can address key social challenges, such as access to housing, social exclusion and population ageing. It provides a practical framework for supporting, funding and scaling up cohousing initiatives.

How to use it:

- **Designing inclusive policies**: Learn how to remove regulatory and legal barriers to foster the development of cohousing communities in your territory.
- **Encourage public-private partnerships**: Discover innovative financing models and collaboration strategies that ensure the economic viability of projects.
- **Measuring impact**: Use the indicators and evaluation methods provided to analyse the social and environmental impact of these initiatives in your community.



The guide will show you how cohousing can be a driver of urban regeneration and social cohesion. It will help you design strategies that not only benefit cohousing residents, but also the wider community, strengthening resilience and sustainable development in your region.

Collective learning for practical application

The **Cohousilience Handbook** is not a one-way tool, but a dynamic document that invites you to reflect, learn and act. To get the most out of it:

1. **Adapt it to your reality:** Each context is unique, and the handbook offers examples, tools and methodologies that can be tailored to your specific needs.
2. **Apply what you have learnt:** from planning a cohousing to managing community dynamics, use the practical sections to implement concrete actions.
3. **Share and collaborate:** The handbook is an invitation to build networks of support and learning among cohousers, leaders and administrations, generating an impact that transcends borders.

The Cohousilience handbook is a gateway to a model of collective living and working that transforms both individuals and communities. Whatever your role, this guide will provide you with the inspiration, tools and knowledge you need to become part of an innovative and collaborative solution to today's challenges - it's time to imagine, build and lead change towards a more just, inclusive and sustainable co-housing!

3- Inspiring experiences

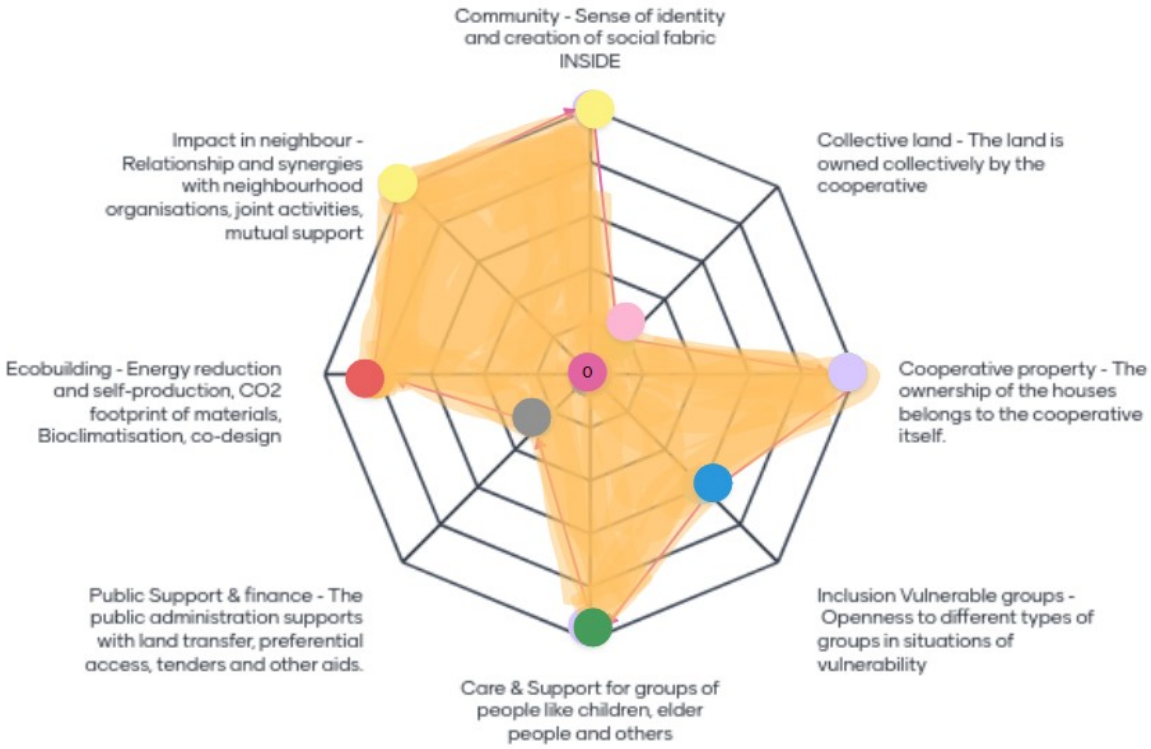
In this section we invite you to a journey through the real cases that have given shape and meaning to the Cohousilience project. Here you will discover a set of diverse experiences in terms of contexts, organisational models, target audiences, scales and ways of living. But they all have one thing in common: they show that another way of living, more cooperative, more humane and more sustainable, is not only desirable, but also possible.

Each experience gathers valuable lessons: how the inclusion of vulnerable groups has been worked on, what alliances have been key in the territory, how the projects have been economically sustained, or what social, legal or architectural innovations have been implemented. This section does not aim to offer closed recipes, but to open up new paths. Because if there is one thing we have learned, it is that each co-housing project is unique, but they can all be nourished by the seeds that have already germinated in other places.

GAIA House - A Cohousing Model for Inclusion and Autonomy

Casa GAIA, promoted by the FAI Padova Social Cooperative, represents an innovative cohousing model in Europe, designed to respond to the challenges of population ageing, social inclusion and housing sustainability. Located in Vigonza, Padua (Italy), this project offers a viable and replicable alternative to traditional residences for the elderly and other vulnerable groups.

More than just a residential complex, Casa GAIA is an ecosystem of co-housing, where community living and self-management play a key role in the well-being of its residents. Below, we explore its salient features and key learnings that can inspire the development of future cohousing projects in other contexts.



Architecture and Shared Spaces: Designing for Coexistence

Casa GAIA is structured around a combination of private spaces and shared areas, creating a balance between individual autonomy and communal living.

Private housing:

- Independent flats with bathroom and kitchen.
- Single rooms with private bathroom (some with shared corners).

Common areas:

- Gymnasium for the physical well-being of residents.
- Laundry and ironing facilities to make daily life easier.
- Shared kitchen and dining room that promote conviviality and cultural exchange.
- Playroom for intergenerational meetings, encouraging the connection between different generations.
- Green areas and outdoor spaces designed for enjoyment and socialising.

A design that balances privacy with community interaction allows residents to maintain their independence while enjoying a supportive and socially connected environment.

Cohousing and Social Diversity: A Space for Inclusion

Casa GAIA is not only aimed at older people, but also welcomes a diverse community with the aim of fostering mutual support and intergenerational coexistence.

Major groups of residents:

- Autonomous or semi-autonomous elderly people.
- Families and single-parent families.
- People in vulnerable situations.

iversity in living together generates natural support networks and strengthens social resilience, allowing people of different ages and backgrounds to find a common home.

Support and Welfare Services: Beyond Housing

The Casa GAIA model integrates a series of socio-healthcare support services to ensure the quality of life of residents without the need for institutionalisation.

Home health care:

- Physiotherapy and rehabilitation.
- Nursing services.
- Psychological and educational support.

Community services:

- Solidarity Concierge, a reference point for the organisation of community life.
- Private medical care and analysis centre, with accessible care for cohousers.
- Education and training programmes, including school support and youth activities.
- Cultural and creative events, such as art, theatre and photography workshops.

The incorporation of comprehensive services within cohousing allows for the extension of residents' autonomy, avoiding the need to resort to institutionalised care centres.

Sustainability and Energy Efficiency

Casa GAIA has been designed with a focus on sustainability, applying ecological and energy criteria that minimise the environmental impact of the project.

- **Renewable energy:** Installation of photovoltaic solar panels (6KW with 10KW storage).
- **Sustainable construction:** Use of eco-efficient materials such as wood and glass.
- **Electric mobility:** Charging station for electric vehicles.
- **High-performance thermal insulation** according to CAM (*Minimum Environmental Criteria*) standards.
- **Windows with optimised thermal transmission**, improving energy efficiency.

Incorporating green building principles into cohousing projects not only reduces operating costs, but also improves the quality of life for residents.

Management Model and Economic Sustainability

Casa GAIA operates under a private and self-managed model, without direct support from municipal or public entities.

Ownership and governance:

- The FAI Padova Cooperative owns the building and leases it to residents.
- It is not dependent on municipal subsidies, which guarantees greater autonomy in management.

Project funding:

- Total investment of €1,500,000, distributed in:
- 63% covered by IAF (' 1,000,000.00)
- European and private foundation funds (€200,000.00)
- Planned additional construction (€250,000.00)

Economic model based on affordable rents:

- Residents pay rent to cover operating costs.
- **Affordable alternative** to conventional retirement homes, which cost between €3,000 and €4,000 per month, while cohousing has reduced service costs of approximately €1,500.

A diversified funding model and autonomous management guarantee the long-term viability and replicability of cohousing.

Relationship with the Community and the Environment

Casa GAIA is not a closed space, but seeks to create synergies with the neighbourhood and the local community.

Linking with local associations:

- Access to the services of the **Cultural Association Il Cerchio della Luna**.
- Participation in events and programmes organised by social groups in the area.

Connection to the municipal theatre:

- Cultural activities for residents, promoting their integration into the cultural life of Vigonza.

Accessibility and sustainable mobility:

- Strategic location, well connected by public transport.

- Pedestrian footpaths and cycle paths to facilitate access to the city centre.

Integrating cohousing into the local ecosystem strengthens its impact and ensures that the model is part of the wider community fabric.

An Inspiring Model for the Future of Cohousing

Casa GAIA is an example of how cohousing can offer a sustainable, inclusive and economically viable alternative to traditional housing and assisted living. Its main values and learnings are:

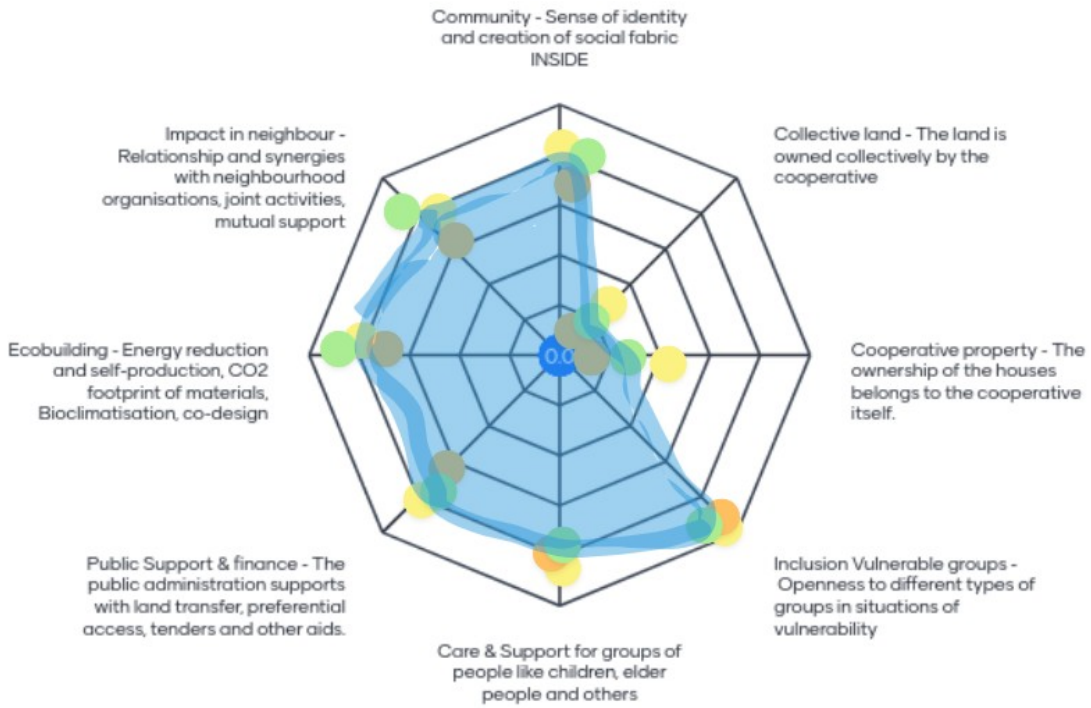
- Autonomy and self-management: A model without dependence on public subsidies.
- Diversity and inclusion: A cohousing for older people, families and vulnerable groups.
- Integrated services: Health care, welfare and training within cohousing.
- Environmental sustainability: renewable energy and eco-efficient construction.
- Connection with the environment: A project open to the local community.

Casa GAIA demonstrates that cohousing is not just a housing solution, but a living model that promotes community resilience, collaboration and dignity in living together. Its experience is a source of inspiration for new initiatives across Europe and beyond.

Luoghi Comuni San Salvario: Temporary Cohousing for Inclusion and Social Mobility

Luoghi Comuni San Salvario is an innovative model of temporary cohousing that was born in 2015 as part of the Housing Program of the Compagnia di San Paolo and Ufficio Pio in Turin. Its main purpose is to offer a housing solution to people in times of transition or vulnerability, allowing them to stabilise their personal, social and economic situation before accessing permanent housing.

This project represents a new paradigm in social housing, fusing accessibility, coexistence and connection to the local community. It not only provides a roof over their heads, but also fosters the creation of community ties and access to essential resources to facilitate residents' autonomy.



Structure and Shared Spaces

24 fully furnished flats with private kitchens and bathrooms.

Common areas designed for socialising and culture, including a large communal kitchen and an exhibition hall used for artistic and cultural events open to the neighbourhood.



Diversity of Profiles and Inclusive Coexistence

Cohousing maintains **a diversity of residents** in terms of age, gender, nationality and occupation, which enriches cohabitation and mutual learning.

It is aimed at **three main groups**:

- **Students and** mobile **workers.**
- **People under housing stress** due to economic, social or family difficulties.
- **People in housing emergency**, referred by social services.

A Model of Social Management and Participation

The management of the cohousing was entrusted to the **social cooperative Atypica**, specialised in community and sustainable housing.

Participatory governance is promoted, where residents can be involved in the management of the spaces and in the organisation of cultural and social activities.

Support services such as a **Job Desk, legal advice and emotional support** help residents to improve their autonomy.



Community Impact and Relationship with the Environment

Community activities such as concerts, book launches and theatre events are open to the neighbourhood, fostering integration between cohousers and the local community.

The connection to the city is key: Luoghi Comuni San Salvario acts as a bridge between housing and urban life, ensuring that residents are not isolated but fully integrated into the social and economic life of the neighbourhood.

Accessible Economic Model

Maximum stay of 18 months, with affordable rents adapted to the economic capacity of the residents.

Double tariff system: rent controlled for people in vulnerability and standard rent for those with more economic stability.



Key Lessons for Other Projects

Flexibility and adaptability: Temporary cohousing models can be key for people in transition, offering a short-term solution with no commitment to permanence.

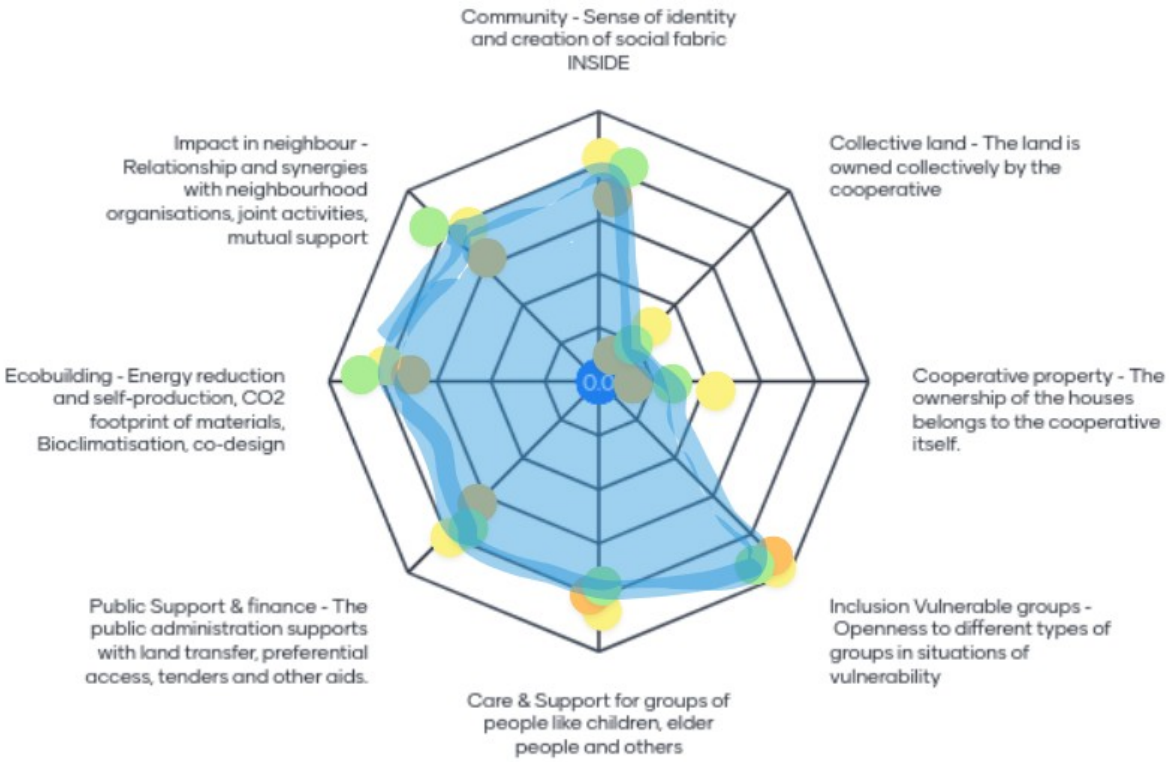
Diversity as a value: Inclusive and diverse cohousing creates an environment of mutual learning and social support.

Open spaces for the community: Integrating the neighbourhood through cultural activities strengthens the relationship between residents and the environment.

Social management and accompaniment: Complementary support services (employment, legal and emotional counselling) are essential to ensure the future autonomy of residents.

Spazio Ca.S.A. - Cohousing and Community Support for Housing Autonomy

Spazio Ca.S.A. (Cantiere Sociale Aperto) is a cohousing project focused on individuals and families in a situation of housing stress or precariousness, providing a safe and accompanied environment to facilitate their transition to stable housing. Unlike other models, this project not only provides housing, but actively works on the empowerment of residents through social, employment and training support.



A Housing Support Centre

The heart of the project is **the social space in Via Tasca**, where residents can access a range of services designed to facilitate their integration and autonomy.

Key services include:

- **Job Desk** for active job search.
- **Housing search advice**, providing assistance and guidance on available options.
- **Emotional listening and support** through individual and family interviews.
- **Social secretariat** for assistance with administrative procedures and access to digital resources.
- **Reception space for migrants**, offering advice on residence permits and citizenship.
- **Exchange of objects and clothes** through the *Object Library*.



Personalised Accompaniment

The model considers **three key dimensions** of residents' autonomy:

Economic and Financial Capital: Work on resource planning and money management.

Social Capital: The creation of support networks between residents and the community is encouraged.

Cultural Capital: Training is offered in digital skills, financial literacy and access to public services.

Diversity and Social Cohesion

The cohousing houses **more than 120 people**, including families, people in search of stable housing and migrants in the process of regularisation.

Community activities and events are held to strengthen ties between residents and with the neighbourhood.

Initiatives such as **urban gardens and play areas for children** have been developed, promoting intergenerational coexistence.

Management and Governance Model

The building is owned by the **Di Vittorio Cooperative**, under an **undivided ownership** model, where residents are members of the cooperative and pay a monthly fee.

Social management and mediation with the neighbourhood is the responsibility of **Atypica**, which receives municipal funding to maintain the project and facilitate social integration.

Economic Sustainability and Accessibility

Controlled rents adjusted to the economic capacities of the residents.

Affordable prices, with rents ranging from €350 to €700, depending on the size of the property.

Municipal support to ensure long-term viability.



Key Lessons for Other Projects

Cohousing as a transition tool: Projects such as Spazio Ca.S.A. show how cohousing can be a solution for those who need time and support before accessing stable housing.

Integrated support services: The combination of housing with employment, social and housing counselling strengthens residents' ability to achieve autonomy.

Cooperative management and municipal collaboration: Hybrid models with cooperation between social organisations and municipalities can ensure the sustainability of cohousing.

Community building: Encouraging collaboration between residents through shared activities improves coexistence and social integration.

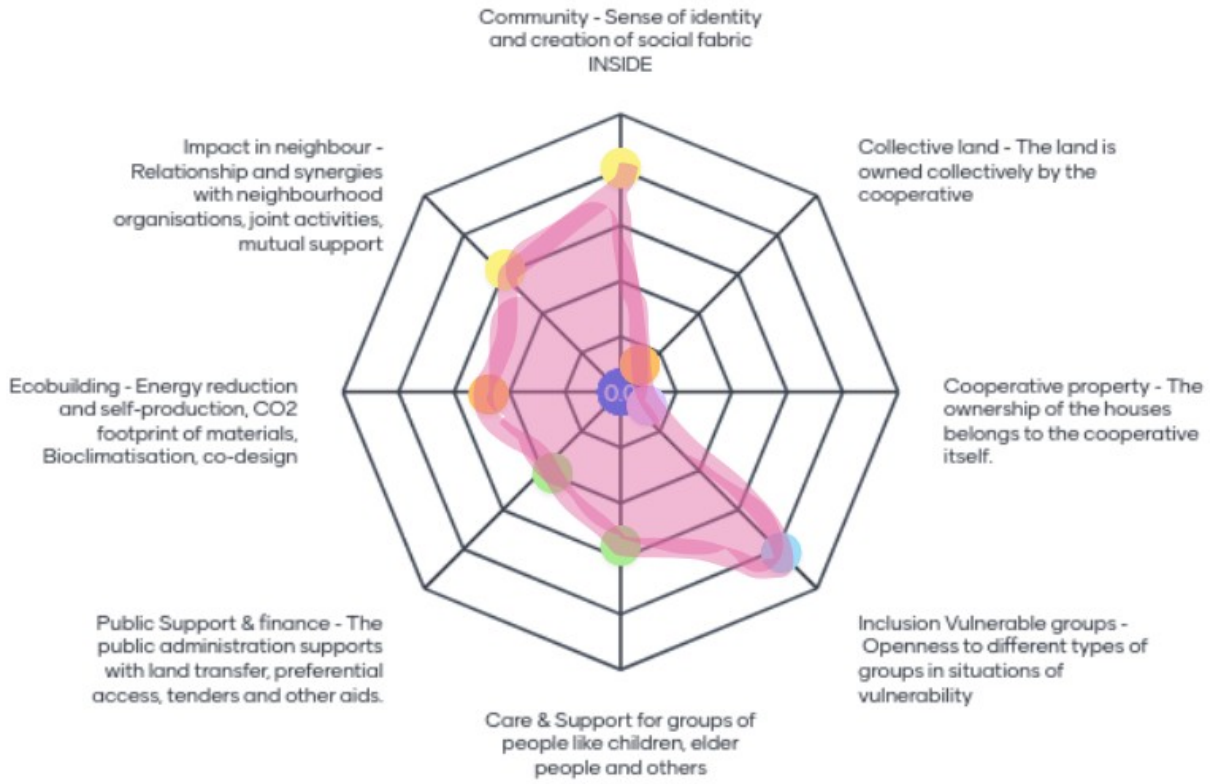


Colocation ELSAU: Temporary and Solidarity Cohousing

A cohousing model for refugees and local residents

Colocation ELSAU is a pioneering initiative in Strasbourg that offers temporary shared accommodation to people in vulnerable situations, especially refugees and locals in transition. Since its creation in 2021, the project has welcomed 71 residents, ensuring intergenerational, intercultural and socio-economically diverse cohabitation.

The particularity of this cohousing is its broad community dimension: with 35 residents simultaneously, the project fosters a strong sense of solidarity and cooperation, key to the integration of new inhabitants and their transition towards sustainable autonomy.



Shared housing with social integration

12 shared flats, accommodating between 2 and 4 persons per unit.
Common spaces designed for coexistence and mutual support.
Frequent community events to strengthen ties between residents.

Diversity of profiles and a constantly evolving community

32 refugees and 14 local residents have been part of the project.
Each cohousing is designed with diversity in terms of gender, age and economic status.
Stays of up to 18 months, ensuring a rotation that allows more people to benefit from the model.



Management Model and Legal Regulation

The project operates under **Article 29 of the ELAN Act**, which allows for the **temporary occupation of vacant housing**.

Ownership of the building: **CDC Habitat Social**, a major player in social renting in France with more than 300,000 homes.

Being in an **ANRU urban renewal programme**, the building will be temporarily occupied until December 2025.

Sustainability and greening

The use of **empty buildings** is already an environmentally sustainable approach.

Ecological rehabilitation is promoted, using second-hand furniture.

Participatory workshops where residents and volunteers contribute to the refurbishment of the building.

Raising awareness among inhabitants about the **energy impact** of their lifestyle.

Economic Model and Affordability

Income adjusted to the economic capacities of the residents.
Rent price: **142€ per month + 141€ expenses (water and electricity)**, well below the market.

Community Impact and Relationship with the Neighbourhood

Each cohousing defines its **rules and shared values** to ensure a respectful and collaborative environment.

Organisation of **community events**, such as collective dinners, sports and cultural activities.

Collaborations with other associations such as **Stammtish and Kabubu**, promoting social integration.



Key Lessons for Other Projects

Optimising the use of vacant housing: Temporary occupation of empty buildings is an innovative solution to the housing crisis.

Flexible and replicable model: Can be adapted to different urban contexts with similar needs.

Effective social integration: Coexistence between refugees and locals fosters mutual learning and social support.

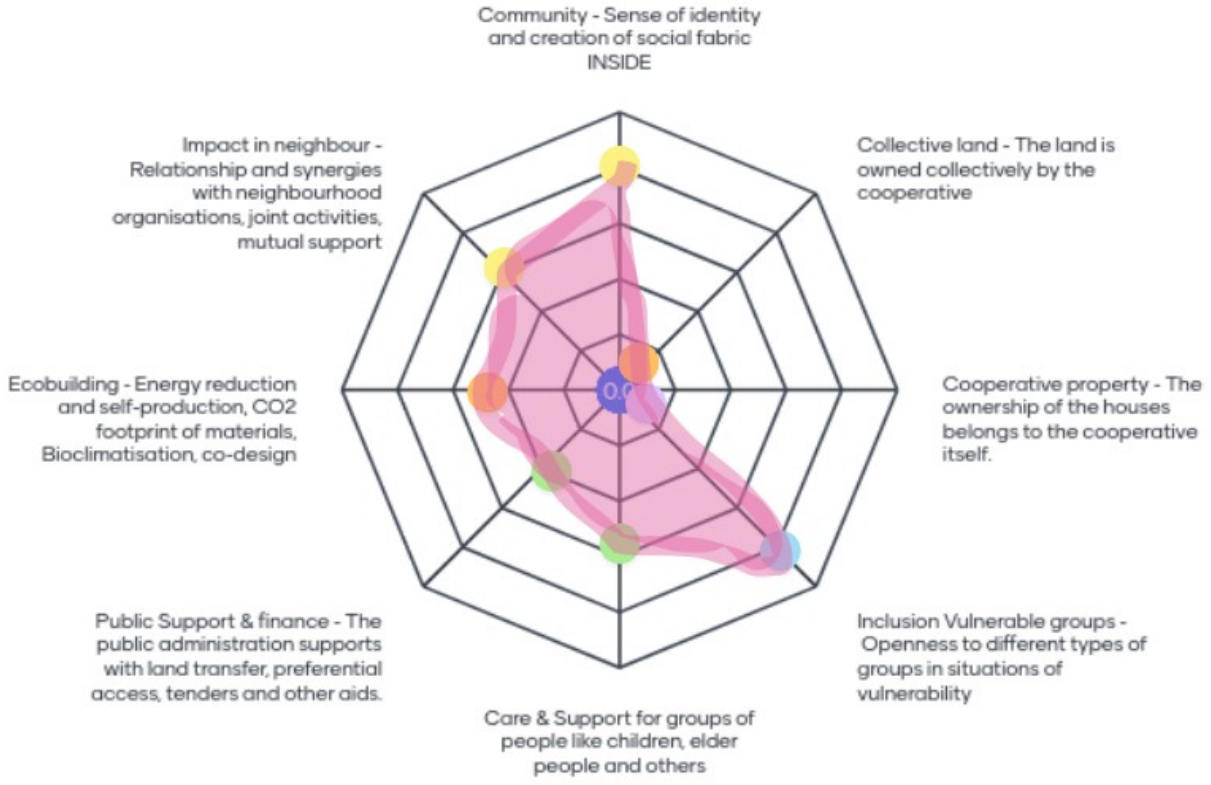
Low-cost and sustainable model: Ecological rehabilitation and efficient use of resources make the project financially viable.

Colocation Lamarck: Intercultural Cohousing

A coexistence space for refugees and local residents

The Colocation Lamarck, located in Montreuil, is a multicultural cohousing initiative offering a temporary home to refugees and local residents in transition. Since its opening in January 2023, the cohousing has been a safe space to foster autonomy, integration and cultural diversity.

The model is particularly innovative because it combines small housing units with shared spaces, allowing for closer and more collaborative living.

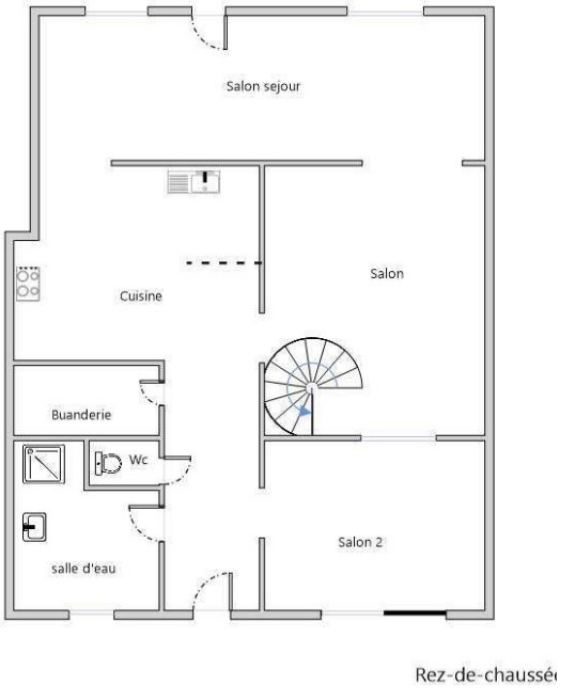


Flexible housing structure

Two residential units:

- A small individual house.
- A larger house with space for 5 persons.

Shared common areas, including kitchen, laundry, garden and outdoor patio.





Diversity and inclusion

Refugees, international students and local residents share housing.

Stays of **up to 18 months** to ensure rotation and integration of new members.

Innovation in Management and Regulation

Two legal models of occupation:

- Initially under **Article 29 of the ELAN Act** for temporary occupation of vacant housing.

- Since 2024, it has been operating under an **intermediate lease**, offering greater stability and management autonomy.

Building loaned by the city of Montreuil for a period of 36 months (renewable).

Sustainability and Ecological Awareness

Use of **empty buildings** to avoid property speculation.

Refurbishment with **recycled materials and second-hand furniture**.

Participatory workshops for residents to contribute to the improvement of the space.

Raising awareness of ecological footprint and energy consumption.

Accessible Economic Model

Rent adapted to the economic situation of each resident.
Affordable rents:

- Under ELAN: **between €75 and €200**.
- With the new intermediate rental model: **€315 per month**.

Community Impact and Neighbourhood Relationship

Partnership with the town of Montreuil to facilitate the integration of people in the social housing market.

Partnership with Label Gamelle, a soup kitchen that supports people in the process of finding work.

Participation in neighbourhood initiatives, promoting intercultural coexistence and mutual support.



Key Lessons for Other Projects

Hybridisation of occupancy models: The combination of **temporary occupancy and intermediate tenancy** provides flexibility and stability.

Small units with shared spaces: Facilitates cohabitation without losing individual autonomy.

Integration in the local community: Collaborating with local organisations and the municipality improves the sustainability of the project.

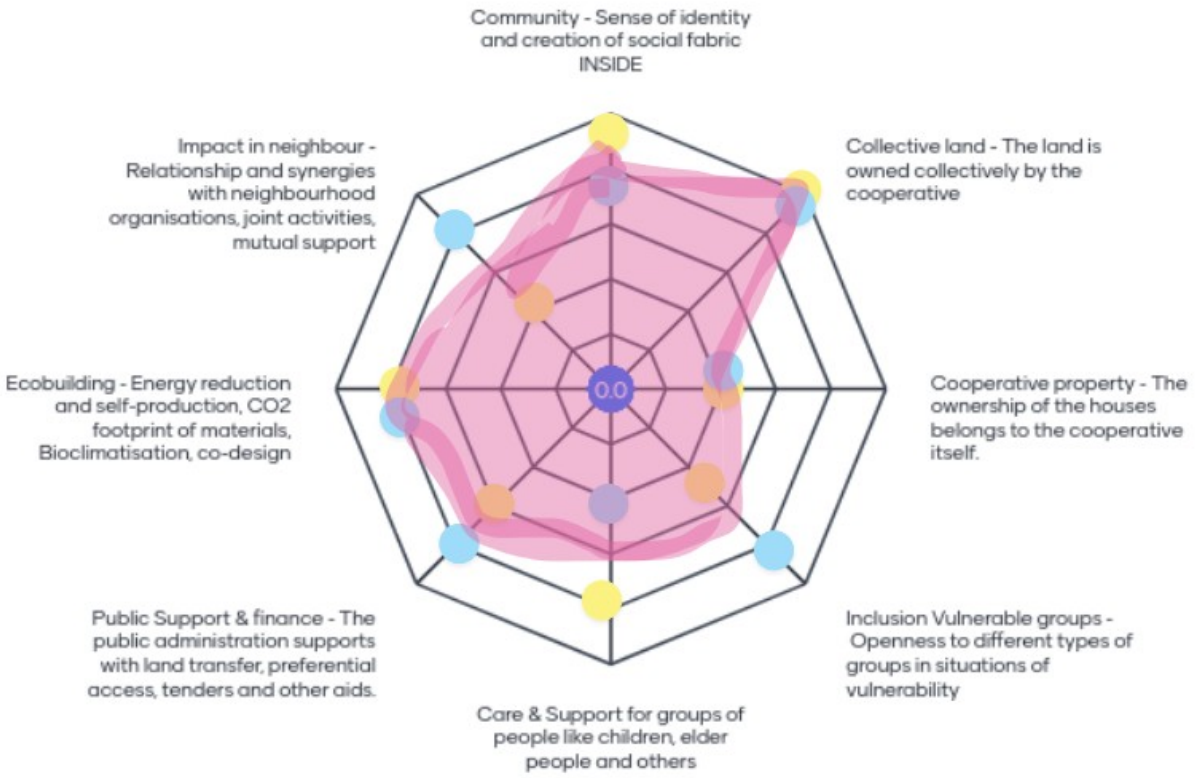
Affordability: Tariffs adjusted to the economic capacity of residents make the model viable in the long term.

CALICO - Care and Living in Community

Intergenerational Cohousing with a Gender and Community Care Perspective

The CALICO (Care and Living in Community) project is an innovative model of intergenerational cohousing developed in Brussels. Created with the support of the Urban Innovative Actions initiative of the European Union, the project was designed to ensure affordable access to housing, promoting solidarity, gender equality and a culture of care.

One of its most innovative features is the integration of a birth home and an end-of-life home, allowing people to come into the world and leave in a familiar and welcoming environment.



Affordable housing and community ownership

It is located on **Community Land Trust (CLTB) land**, ensuring its long-term accessibility.

Land **is kept out of the speculative market**, protecting the right to housing.

The housing is divided between four partners: **CLTB, Angela.D, Pass-ages and CPAS de Forest**.

Diversity and Inclusion

Intergenerational model: Includes families, young people and older people.

Focus on gender equity: Angela.D leads initiatives to integrate a gender perspective in shared housing.

Active participation of residents, encouraging self-organisation and mutual support.

Shared Spaces and Community Living

Community garden and collective spaces open to the neighbourhood.

A **"place of connections" (lieu de liens)** that strengthens the relationship with the local community.

The birth home and the end-of-life home are **managed by Pass-ages**, providing professional and voluntary accompaniment.

Sustainability and Urban Impact

Focus on **sustainable construction** with ecological criteria.

Project **integrated in the neighbourhood**, promoting local development and coexistence.

Accessible architecture, facilitating the mobility of all residents.

Key Lessons for Other Projects

Community Land Trusts as a model for affordable housing.

Integration of care in housing, addressing both birth and end of life in community.

Active participation of residents, creating links and mutual support.

Intergenerational approach, where young and old share experiences and learning.

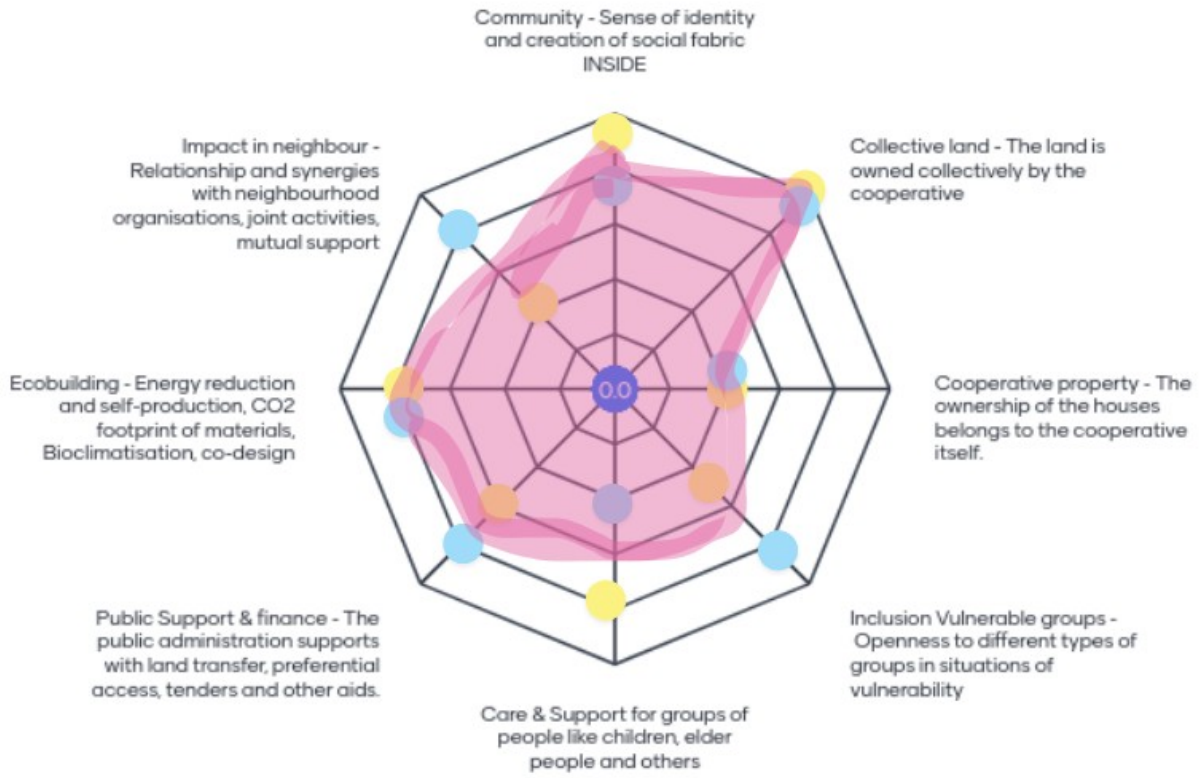
Sustainability and gender perspective as pillars for an inclusive and equitable cohousing.

Indépendance - Industrial Space Renovation for Cohousing

Conversion of Industrial Buildings into Community Housing

The Indépendance project in Molenbeek is an urban regeneration initiative, which has transformed former industrial buildings into modern and sustainable cohousing. Connected by green roofs and terraces, this model proposes an affordable housing solution for families, young workers and residents from diverse backgrounds.

Located in a mixed neighbourhood with shops and facilities, Indépendance offers an inclusive and sustainable living environment, ensuring a fluid relationship with the urban environment.



Architectural Renovation and Urban Integration

Conversion of **two industrial buildings** into spacious and bright flats.

Located in a **diverse neighbourhood and connected by public transport** (tram, bus and metro).

Green spaces on the roofs to improve the environmental quality of the complex.

Ownership and Management Model

21 flats, including studios, 1, 2 and 3 bedroom flats.

Shared ownership with the possibility of **purchasing additional spaces** such as parking spaces.

Participatory management of **common spaces and community activities**.

Shared Spaces for Community Living

Community laundry and multi-purpose room, promoting collaboration between neighbours.

Bicycle parking and shared storage, facilitating a more sustainable lifestyle.

Private terraces and gardens, combining autonomy with collective spaces.

Sustainability and Environmental Impact Reduction

Efficient use of existing spaces, without the need for new construction.

Energy optimisation and reduction of the ecological footprint.

Connection with the neighbourhood, encouraging a mixed use of urban spaces.

Key Lessons for Other Projects

Reuse of industrial buildings as a strategy for urban regeneration.

Cohousing in mixed urban environments, integrating housing with shops and services.

Participatory management of common spaces, strengthening community life.

Energy optimisation and shared green spaces, promoting sustainability.

Flexibility in ownership models, facilitating access to housing in dense urban contexts.

The CLTB model: Affordable Housing, Real Participation and Sustainable Community

The **Brussels Community Land Trust (CLTB)** represents an innovative model of access to housing in urban contexts. It is based on the idea that land should not be a speculative asset, but a common resource at the service of the right to decent housing. Its approach combines **affordability**, **community participation** and **neighbourhood integration**, resulting in a replicable model that guarantees affordable housing for present and future generations.

Anti-speculation: Land is not for sale

One of the pillars of the CLTB model is to take land out of the real estate market to prevent prices from skyrocketing over time. How do they achieve this?

- **Collective ownership of the land**: The land belongs to the CLTB Foundation and is never sold, which prevents its use for speculative purposes.
- **Split ownership**: People buy only their home, but not the land. This reduces the entry price without losing stability.
- **Limited resale price**: If someone decides to sell their home, there is a price cap to maintain affordability. *Keys*: The right to housing is protected against the logic of the market. It ensures that today's affordable homes will be affordable tomorrow.

Participation: People at the centre

CLTB doesn't just provide housing: it creates community. The people who live in the projects are actively involved in the whole process:

- **Co-design of the spaces**: Before moving in, the future residents collaborate in defining what their home will look like.
- **Self-managed working groups**: These are organised to manage the building, common spaces and community activities.

- **Shared governance**: CLTB's governing body includes residents, representatives of civil society and public administration.
- **Training and support**: Workshops are offered so that everyone has tools for community and financial management. *Keys*: More than just living, it is about **building community from the beginning**, promoting autonomy and co-responsibility.

Neighbourhood integration: Not living in isolation, but connected

CLTB projects are integrated into the fabric of the neighbourhood, fostering community life beyond its walls:

- **Shared spaces**: Each project includes gardens, common rooms or spaces open to the neighbourhood.
- **Collaboration with local entities**: Alliances are forged with associations, social services or cultural groups.
- **Urban revitalisation**: Many projects rehabilitate abandoned or underused buildings. *Key*: Housing becomes a **tool for neighbourhood transformation**, adding life, relationships and opportunities to the environment.

Long-term affordability

One of the innovations of the CLTB model is that affordability is not ad hoc but structural:

- **Purchase only of the property, not the land**, which reduces entry prices.
- **Limitation on resale** to avoid future speculation.
- **Financial support** from public administrations, foundations and ethical banks. *Keys*: The model ensures that each generation can access decent housing without compromising the economic sustainability of the project.

Community management and co-responsibility

CLTB is committed to shared governance that strengthens the common life and organisational capacity of the group:

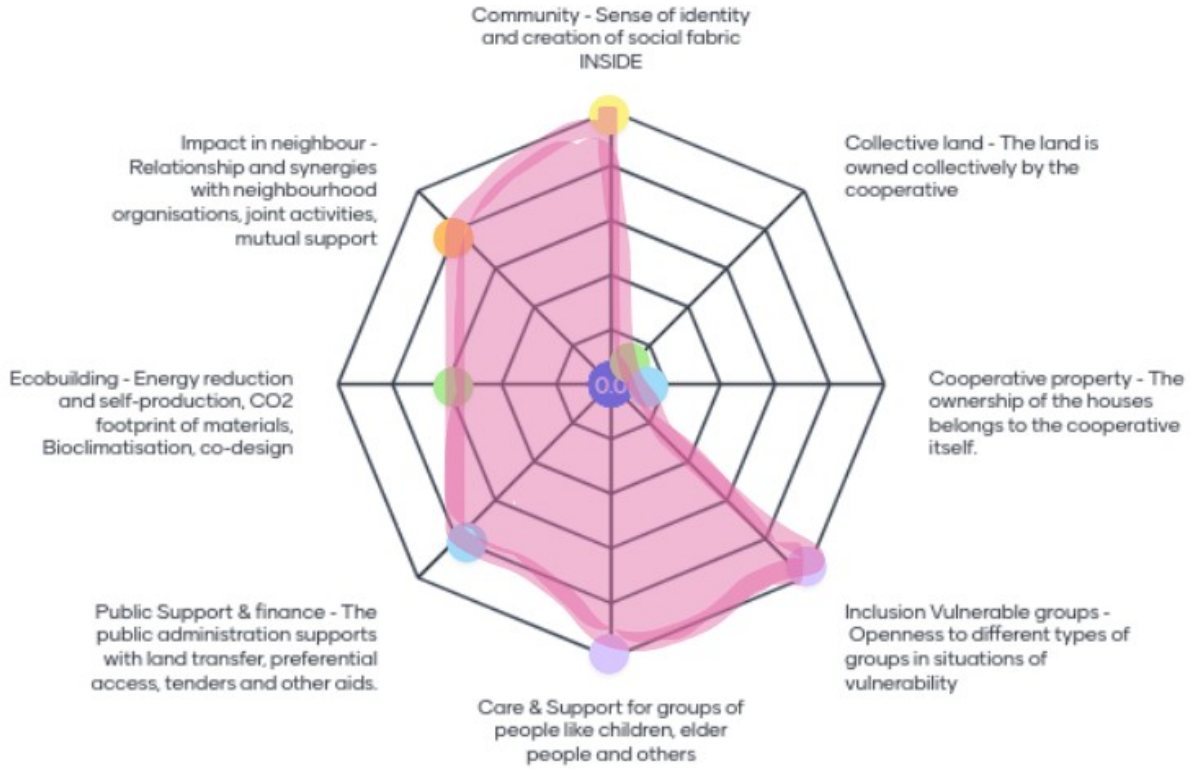
- **Management groups** for day-to-day maintenance and decisions.
- **Presence in the governing bodies of** the foundation.
- **Continuous training** in management, coexistence and leadership tools.
  Keys: Direct involvement creates identity, belonging and the ability to sustain projects in the long term.



Co-Kot BXL. Model of intercultural and community coexistence

Co-Kot BXL is an intergenerational cohousing initiative that brings together students and young newcomers (mainly unaccompanied asylum-seeking minors) in a collaborative housing model with a strong social and pedagogical component. Located in the attic of a former school in the centre of Brussels - today converted into a vibrant living and working space - this project offers 11 fully equipped individual studios, combining privacy with shared spaces to foster bonding, mutual support and collective learning.

The building's integral management is in the hands of the NGO **De Overmolen**, an organisation with a long history of offering creative and sustainable responses to urban challenges, always with a special focus on people in vulnerable situations. In addition, Co-Kot BXL has the collaboration of multiple social and educational actors, who accompany both students and young migrants throughout the process of living together.



A balanced model of coexistence

Each person has their own individual studio with bathroom, kitchen and a mezzanine for sleeping. In addition, there is a common room equipped for cooking, eating and living together. This combination makes it possible to maintain personal autonomy without giving up the opportunity to meet with others. All residents participate in monthly activities, coordination meetings and take turns in managing the shared space.



Diversity as a driver for learning

The resident group is composed of young people over the age of 16, a mix of local students and young refugees or migrants, creating an environment where cultural and personal diversity becomes the main educational and human value.

Collaborative ecosystem

The project is made possible by a strong network of organisations:

- **De Overmolen**: daily and technical building management.
- **Baita**: social rent office that manages contracts and payments.
- **Minor-Ndako** and **PAG-ASA**: offer accompaniment to young migrants.
- **Odisee (Martin Van Camp)**: recruitment, evaluation and mediation with students.

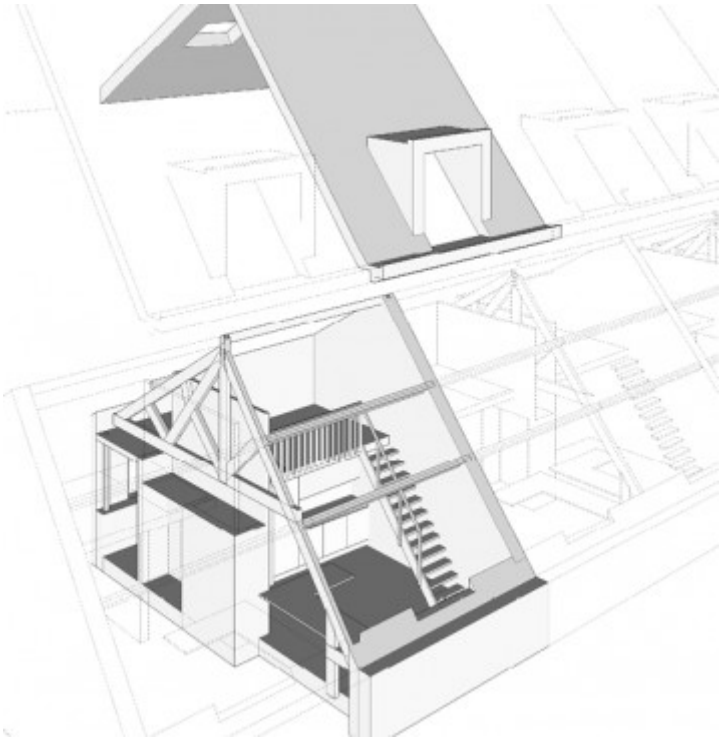
The whole is coordinated by a strategic committee made up of all participating entities.



Technical, architectural and ecological aspects

The refurbishment of the space began in 2019 with a complete renovation of the building's roof. The attic was completely transformed: skylights were installed, 11 studios were built, and a functional space was designed that allows for studying, resting and living in comfort.

Priority was given to natural and sustainable materials, with high standards of energy efficiency and fire safety. Everything was conceived to guarantee comfort, low energy consumption and maximum safety for its inhabitants.



Financial cost and financing

The total cost of the project was over **€1,400,000**, or approximately **€125,000 per housing unit**. Funding came from various sources:

- Brussels Capital Region (intergenerational housing subsidies)
- Funds from the Flemish region
- King Baudouin Foundation (crowdfunding)
- Ethical lending by banks such as **Hefboom** and **HBK**
- Direct contribution from social economy enterprises in Brussels

Relationship with the environment

Co-Kot BXL is located within the **Sint-Joris Site**, a former school rehabilitated as a hub for cohousing and social spaces. Although it has its own access and

autonomy, the project is integrated into the ecosystem of the building, sharing a beautiful garden and facilitating connection with other residents.

This integration with the neighbourhood - in a central but quiet area - offers unique opportunities for social and cultural participation, strengthening the sense of belonging in an environment of diversity and cooperation.

Why is it an inspiring model?

- It demonstrates how it is possible for **people from very different backgrounds and trajectories to live together** when there is a clear framework of mutual respect, participation and care.
- It integrates **social, educational and community organisations**, showing the power of networking.
- It is committed to an architecture designed for the **well-being, sustainability and dignity of people.**
- It is a replicable example for cities seeking **hybrid models of housing and social accompaniment**.

Main themes

This section of the handbook gathers the main **topics** that can be addressed with the different audiences linked to a cohousing project: future and current residents, social entities, technical professionals, public administrations, neighbours, neighbourhood groups or allied agents.

Each of these topics represents an **essential aspect for a collaborative housing project not only to be built, but also to function, grow and be sustained over time**. From group dynamics and decision-making to architecture, economics, legal issues and connection to the environment: **everything counts** when it comes to creating community.

Here you will not find closed recipes, but **a practical and flexible guide** which will allow you to adapt each topic to the group, the stage of the process and the context in which you are working. Because dreaming is not the same as managing, nor is accompanying a co-operative in its beginnings the same as in its consolidation phase.

We have designed this block with three key intentions:

1. **Making sense**: we explain why it is important to work on each topic with the groups.
2. **Open questions**: we propose key questions that can be used to stimulate dialogue and reflection.
3. **Propose pathways**: we offer 2-3 hours of hands-on exercises that you can facilitate directly or adapt to your needs.

Remember: **accompanying cohousing is not just about facilitating processes, it is about weaving links, sustaining contradictions and celebrating collective achievements.** This roadmap is designed to accompany you on that journey.

Initial preparation and warm-up

Before building anything, we need to recognise ourselves as a group. This phase is the emotional and conceptual foundation of the project: it defines the tone, dreams, expectations and energies that will sustain the journey. Starting with awareness and purpose is not a luxury, it is a necessity.

Social and convivial aspects

Living together is not improvised. It requires agreements, skills, trust and structures. This block is the relational heart of cohousing: how we organise ourselves, how we decide, how we take care of the bond when frictions appear... and how we enjoy being together.

Technical aspects

Walls speak. Architecture is not neutral: it conditions how we live, meet and share. Thinking and designing together the spaces we will inhabit allows us to build places that are coherent with our values and real needs. Technology and everyday life go hand in hand.

Economy and sustainability

Without economic sustainability, no project can endure. But here we are not just talking about numbers, but about how to share resources, imagine new ways of investing and sustain ourselves collectively. The economy can be an ally of care, if we put it at the service of the community.

Legal aspects

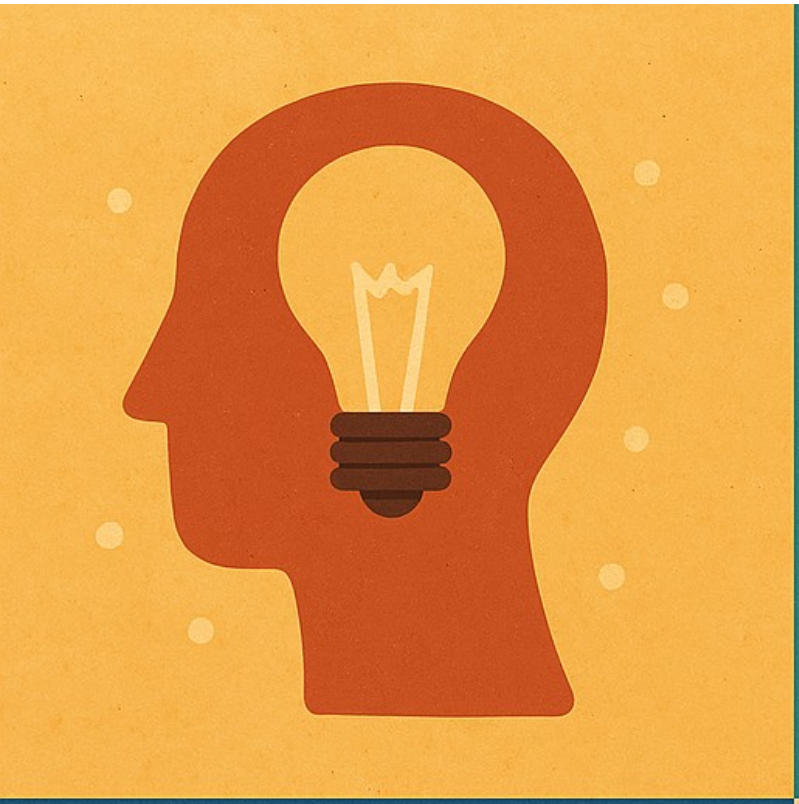
The legal structure we choose is the backbone of cohousing. It protects us, organises us, allows us to access resources and gives us stability. Understanding the legal figures and choosing wisely is key to guaranteeing the autonomy and continuity of the project.

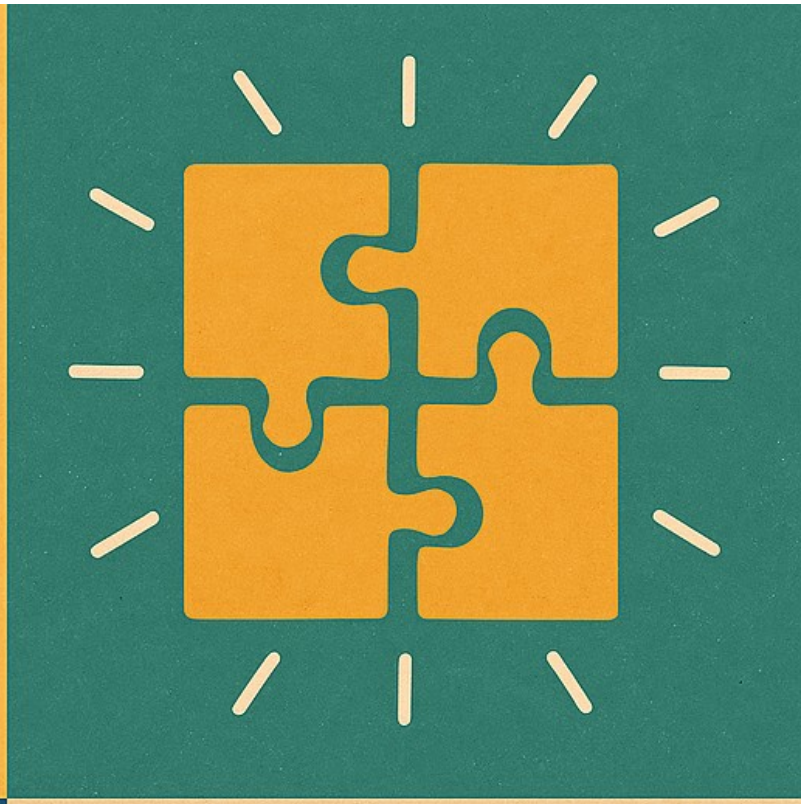
Ecosystem

A cohousing does not live in isolation: it breathes with its neighbourhood, learns from other experiences, collaborates with organisations and connects with the administration. This block invites us to open doors, weave networks and build alliances that make cohousing an actor with an impact on its environment.

Initial preparation

What does "living with other people" mean to you?
What are your fears, wishes and expectations about such a project?
What life stories do we bring to the group?
What do we need to have confidence in this process?
What if the first step is not to decide things, but to listen to each other better?







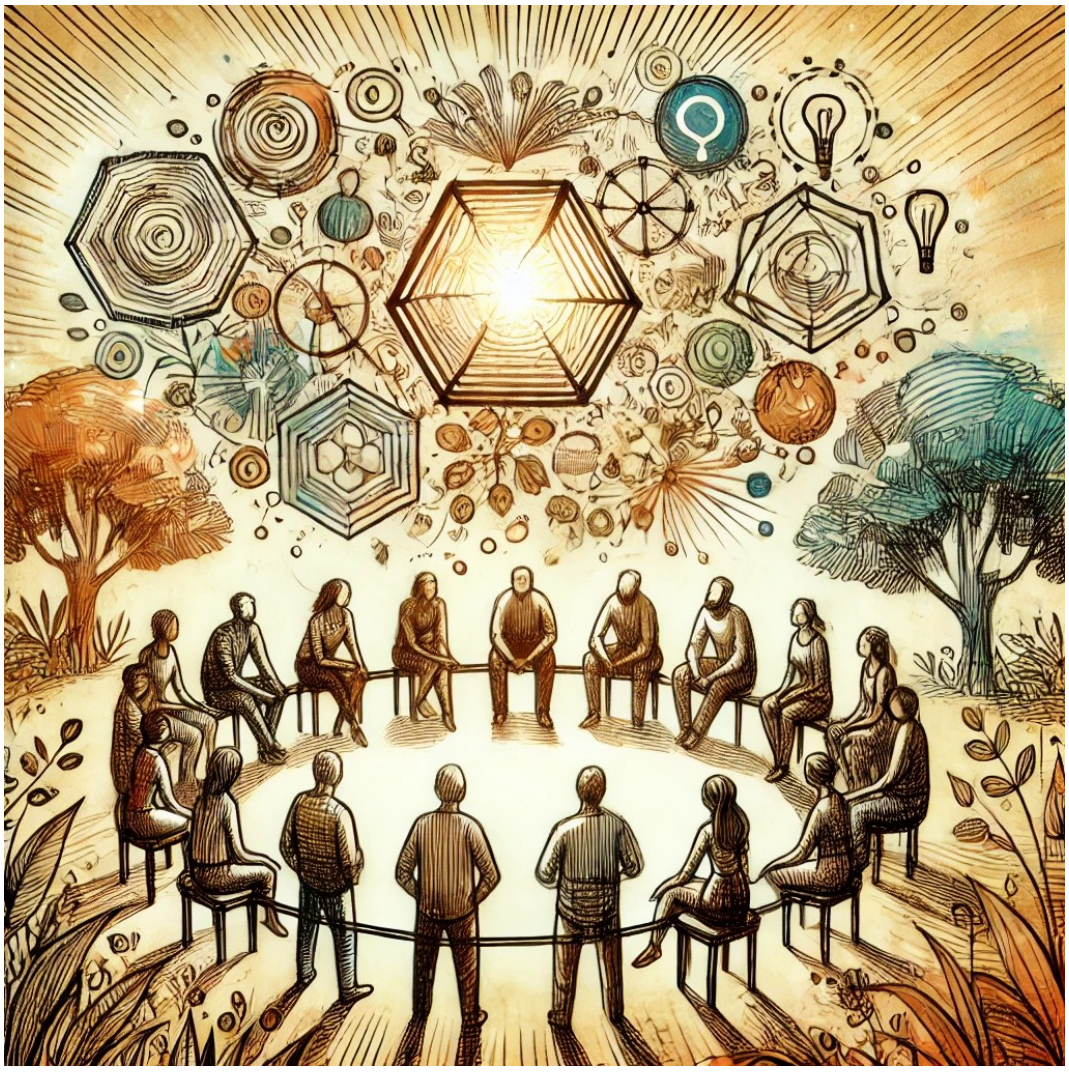


Topic: Approach and conceptual framework

A collective compass to start the way forward

Any cohousing project is much more than an architectural proposal or an economic model. It is, above all, a human, collective and transformative process. And like any process, it has visible and invisible layers: decisions that can be documented... and others that can be felt, sensed or lived on the skin.

Before taking action, we need to open the focus: look at the whole, connect with the purpose, imagine the impact we want to have - not only within the group, but also in the neighbourhood, in the city, in the housing culture. This topic helps us to establish a common framework of shared sense and vision. Because when the direction is clear, every step is stronger.



Methodological framework: Dragon Dreaming

Dragon Dreaming is a collaborative project design methodology that seeks to combine efficiency, creativity, sustainability and personal/collective transformation. It is based on three principles:

1. Personal growth.
2. Community building.
3. Service to the planet.

And it articulates the projects in four circular phases:

1. Dreaming: connecting with purpose, collectively visualising the desired future.
2. Planning: transforming dreams into concrete goals, tasks and structures.
3. Doing: execute collaboratively and flexibly.
4. Celebrate: recognise the achievements, the journey and the relationships built.

Dragon Dreaming helps us to work on the structural as well as the emotional and symbolic aspects of cohousing:

Phase	What does it bring to the project?
Dream	Define the deep what for. It connects with what is desired beyond what is possible. Makes impact and legacy visible.
Plan	It structures, divides, prioritises. It leads us to move from desire to commitment.
Make	It encourages experimentation, learning while acting. It brings different talents into play.
Celebrate	Close cycles, recognise processes, strengthen bonds. And remember that enjoyment is also part of the job.

Dynamics: "The cycle of our project".

Estimated duration: 2h 30min

Participants: 10-30 persons

Objective: to understand the whole cohousing process from the Dragon Dreaming perspective, to situate oneself as a group in this process and to visualise the individual and collective contribution.

Materials needed:

- Continuous paper or wallpaper (minimum 2-3 metres)

- Coloured markers
- Post-its
- Coloured yarn or wool
- Stickers or symbols for marking

Step by step

1. Introduction to the methodology (20 min)

- Briefly explain what Dragon Dreaming is and why it is proposed to initiate this process.
- It presents the four phases (dreaming, planning, doing, celebrating) with examples close to cohousing.

2. Guided visualisation (15 min)

- Propose a silent visualisation exercise:

  Imagine that five years have passed since the project started. What do you see, what do you hear, what do you smell, what do you feel, what has changed in your life and in the environment?

3. Creation of the collective map (60 min)

- Draw a big circle divided into four quadrants (dream, plan, do, celebrate).
- People write on post-its their ideas based on what they have dreamt:
  - What is important to dream?
  - What needs to be planned?
  - What are we going to have to do?
  - What should we not stop celebrating?
- Each idea is placed in its corresponding quadrant. They are grouped by affinity and discussed in small groups.

4. The network of commitment (30 min)

- Each participant chooses an idea (from any phase) that motivates or challenges him/her.
- With coloured yarn or thread, connect this idea with their name on a cardboard or index card.
- We visualise how people connect with different parts of the project.

5. Collective closure (25 min)

- There is a round of words with a final question:

  What part of the project would you particularly like to take care of? What do you think you need to do to do this?

- Impressions are collected and it is suggested to leave the mural visible as a "journey map" for the process.

To close: a broad look at the project

Working on this topic in depth allows people not to get caught up in the immediate (problems, tasks, fears), but to broaden their vision. Understanding that cohousing **is a community in movement** and not just a building helps to put the focus on where the transformation really is.

Dreaming together is not naïve, it is political. Planning collectively is not slow, it is necessary. Doing together is not more difficult, it is more powerful. And celebrating... should always be part of the plan.

Facilitation questions:

- What personal and collective dreams have brought us this far?
- What impact would we like this project to have on our lives and environment?
- How do we balance doing with caring and celebrating?
- What does "success" mean for us in this project?
- What fears or doubts do we have, and how can we accommodate them as part of the process?

Topic: Types of spaces

Designing how we talk, not just what we talk about

In collective processes, it is not only the decisions that matter, but also the type of conversation that takes place at any given moment.

Often groups get confused, blocked or frustrated because they mix levels: they try to make decisions while there is emotional tension, or they evaluate without having fully listened.

That is why it is so important to name and separate spaces from the start.

This topic proposes to identify the four main conversational spaces in groups - enquiry, decision-making, emotional management and evaluation - and to link them to the four phases of Dragon Dreaming.

In this way, the group can develop a systemic and conscious look at its own way of working.

The aim is not to impose rigid structures, but to make the group's internal dynamics clear, careful and effective.



Methodological framework: Process facilitation + Dragon Dreaming

The 4 key conversational spaces:

1. Enquiry: spaces to ask questions, explore possibilities, open up thinking.
2. Decision-making: moments when the group must choose, agree and define actions.
3. Emotional management: spaces to express, welcome, take care of tensions or celebrations.
4. Evaluation: individual and collective moments of reflection and learning.

Connection with the Dragon Dreaming phases:

Dragon Dreaming Phase	Related conversational space
Dream	Enquiry
Plan	Decision-making
Make	Emotional management
Celebrate	Evaluation

This connection makes it possible to plan more balanced, conscious and resilient group processes.

Dynamics "The map of spaces".

Estimated duration: 2h 30min

Participants: 10-30 persons

Objective: to identify the different types of conversations needed in a group, associate them with the phases of the project and design strategies to give them space and time in the process.

Materials needed:

- Continuous paper or blackboard
- Coloured cardstock (one per type of space)
- Cards for examples and situations (Annex 1)
- Adhesive tape, marker pens, kraft paper
- Ample space to move around

Step by step

1. Introduction (20 min)

- The 4 types of conversational spaces are briefly explained and how each has its function.
- It connects to the Dragon Dreaming framework and shows the parallelism.

2. Dynamics "Where are we talking?" (30 min)

- Typical group situations arise in cards (e.g. "there is a conflict without talking", "no agreement is reached", "nobody understands well what was decided").
- In small groups, answer the following questions: What kind of space is this? What is needed here? What happens if this space is not respected?

3. Map of spaces (60 min)

- The four spaces are drawn on the floor as zones (with paper or strings): enquiry, decision, emotion, evaluation.
- People place themselves in the space where they think they feel most comfortable, and then where they think the group most needs to work.
- Lessons learnt are collected: how do we manage this now, where are there imbalances, what could we do to improve it, what could we do to improve it?

4. Collective design (30 min)

- Mixed groups are formed to design an "ideal meeting" or "ideal workshop" containing the four well-defined spaces.
- Each group presents its proposal and key elements for future facilitation are collected.

5. Closing with metaphor (10 min)

- It is proposed to use a metaphor: *"If our group were a house... what would its rooms be like according to the spaces we need*
- Quick round of keywords or drawings to share.

What this dynamic achieves

- Identify why many processes stagnate.
- Recognise the importance of taking care in how we talk.
- Giving legitimacy to emotion, exploration and reflection.
- Prepare the group for more effective and humane meetings and moments.

Facilitation questions:

- What kind of spaces do we need to take care of ourselves as a group?
- At what moments do we need to decide, and how can a space facilitate this?
- Where and how do we express our emotions within the group?
- How do we evaluate what we do and how does space help or limit us?
- What kind of atmospheres (not just places) help us to flourish as a community?

Topic: Roles and key elements

Diversity with purpose: what each person brings to the group

In any group or community, not all people relate to the collective process in the same way. Some dream, some plan, some do, some sustain the mood or nurture the bonds... And all are needed.

Recognising this diversity is not only a question of personality or affinity, it is a **key to creating balanced teams, avoiding frustrations and fostering collaboration**. This topic allows us to visualise what kind of roles a cohousing needs, what profiles there are in the group and how to build a balanced and resilient community.



Methodological framework: Dragon Dreaming + Archetypes of the 4 Elements

Relationship between Dragon Dreaming and the elements:

Phase (Dragon Dreaming)	Element	Characteristics of the role/persona
Dream	Air	Visionary, creative, open to new ideas
Plan	Earth	Rigorous, structured, methodical, reliable
Make	Fire	Executives, enthusiastic, pro-active, with initiative
Celebrate	Water	Caring, empathetic, communicative, sensitive to the group.

Each person has a unique combination of these elements, but there is often a dominant one that influences **how he or she contributes to the group**.

Working on this from the start helps:

- Recognise diversity without judgement.
- Identify deficiencies or excesses of certain energies.
- Forming more balanced work teams.
- Care for co-responsibility, without always overburdening the same people.

Dynamics: "The elements that move us".

Estimated duration: 2h 30min

Participants: 10-30 persons

Objective: to explore and recognise the different roles and energies present in the group, identify collective strengths and what is missing or out of balance.

Materials required:

- Printed sheets with description of each archetype (Annex 2)
- Four corners of space marked with signs: Earth, Water, Air, Fire.
- Large paper and markers
- Stickers or colours to mark preferences
- Self-diagnostic cards

Step by step

1. Introduction to archetypes (20 min)

- The four elements and their associated characteristics are briefly presented.
- They are explained as necessary complementary energies in any group.
- They relate to the phases of Dragon Dreaming.

2. Personal self-diagnosis (20 min)

- Each person completes an index card with sentences such as:
    - I am excited to imagine what the ideal project could look like (Air)
    - I like to order, foresee and organise tasks (Earth)
    - It activates me to get going and resolve (Fire)
    - I care about how people feel and care for the links (Water)
- In the end, each person identifies his or her dominant element (or combination).

3. Human map of elements (30 min)

- People are invited to physically position themselves in the space according to their dominant element.
- Each group reflects:
    - What do we bring to the group?
    - What do we need from others?
    - What are the risks if it's just us?

4. Mixed round (30 min)

- Groups are formed by mixing the four elements.
- A practical question is proposed: *If you were to organise a community event together, how would you divide up the tasks? How would you make decisions? What conflicts might arise*
- Each group presents its reflection.

5. Collective panel (30 min)

- A visual map is created with the names and elements of each person (if desired).
- The "imbalances" of the group are identified: lack of air, lack of fire, who holds the water?
- Agreements or strategies for balancing and nurturing roles are proposed.

6. Closing with personal symbol (20 min)

- Each person draws or writes a symbol that represents their energy in the group and sticks it on the collective mural.
- There is a final round of: *What do I want to continue to contribute? What would I like to strengthen in myself*

What this dynamic achieves

- Increased personal and collective knowledge.
- Mutual recognition and enhancement of each profile.
- Awareness of imbalances and needs of the group.
- Basis for balanced and sustainable teams or commissions.

Facilitation questions:

- What talents and energies are there in the group and how do we put them at the service of the project?
- What tasks connect us to earth (sustain), water (feel), air (think) or fire (drive)?
- Which roles do I tend to take naturally and which do I find more difficult to take on?
- What balance do we need between structure and spontaneity?
- How do we ensure that all voices have their place in the group?

Topic: Needs and expectations

Naming what we expect in order to build what we need

Needs and expectations are always present in any group, even if they are not always clearly expressed. When they are silenced, they tend to become frustrations, misunderstandings or conflicts. When they are made visible and shared, they become a basis for trust and shared direction.

This topic allows the group to take an essential step: to recognise what each person wants, needs and contributes, and from there, to build a common purpose that inspires and guides the whole process.

To name what moves us is also to begin to commit ourselves.



Dynamics: "The best investment of my energy".

Estimated duration: 2h 30min

Participants: 10-40 persons

Objective: to make the individual and collective needs of the group visible, and to co-create an inspiring and realistic common purpose.

Materials needed:

- Coloured Post-its
- Thick markers
- Large kraft paper or wallpaper
- Adhesive tape
- Thread or rope
- Ample space to move around

Step by step

1. Contextualisation and opening (15 min)

Present the objective of the exercise: to collectively build a shared vision of the project based on the real needs and expectations of the group.

The **generative question** is launched:

> *"What does this project have to look like to be the best investment of your time, effort and energy?"*

Individual reflection (15 min)

Each person writes 2-3 answers on post-its (one per idea). Writing concrete wishes is encouraged, not vagueness ("I want to feel part of it", "I want stability", "I need it to be fun", etc.).

3. Movement and positioning (30 min)

- On the floor or on a wall, several axes are drawn: for example,
  - "What I want" vs. "What I need".
  - "Something I contribute" vs. "Something I expect to receive".
- People place their post-its according to where they place each idea, and explain out loud (if they want to) why they place it there.

This gives a **sense of the emotional and aspirational landscape of the group**.

4. Grouping and synthesis (30 min)

The post-its are organised according to common themes: living together, care, time, decisions, economy, group identity, etc.

The group is divided into subgroups, each of which is responsible for synthesising the contributions from one area.

They are asked to write a sentence beginning with:

> *"In order for this project to be a good investment of our energy, we need..."*

5. Building collective purpose (30 min)

The sentences from each group are read and, with the help of the facilitator, a **draft of the group's common purpose** is constructed. This can be in sentence, word cloud or manifesto format.

It is agreed how to keep this result: mural, poster, digital or physical image. It can be hung in the group's space or integrated into the reference documents.

6. Emotional and physical closure (20 min)

Each person is invited to move around the space, look at the mural or purpose map and place themselves where they most connect with their motivation. Close in a circle with the question:

> *"What do I need to sustain my commitment to this purpose?"*

What does this dynamic achieve?

- Generate clarity on what each person expects and needs.
- Prevent future misunderstandings and conflicts.
- Building cohesion from the diversity of motivations.
- Create a common framework to guide decisions and actions.
- Encourage commitment from a shared sense of purpose.

Guiding questions for facilitation

- What do you hope to find in this project that really motivates you?
- What would make you feel it was worth all the effort?
- What conditions do you need to get involved with confidence?
- What would you like this project to leave its mark (on you, on the group, on the neighbourhood)?
- What difference would this project make to your life if it works well?

Social and convivial aspects

- How do we make collective decisions in a fair and agile way?
- What are the minimum rules that allow us to live together joyfully?
- What do we do when there is conflict or differences?
- How do we take care of common tasks without them becoming a burden?
- How do we celebrate, support and grow as a group?

Topic: Self-managed teams

Co-creating living, flexible and meaningful structures

A community is not sustained by goodwill alone: it needs structures that organise day-to-day life without bureaucracy or authoritarian hierarchy. This is where self-management comes into play, i.e. the ability of a group to organise itself collectively, distributing responsibilities in a meaningful way and creating spaces where each person knows what he or she can contribute and what is expected of him or her.

Working on this topic allows people to recognise themselves as an active part of the project, to discover in which spaces they can feel useful and comfortable, and for the group to experience forms of organisation based on trust, co-responsibility and listening.



Conceptual framework: self-management, sociocracy and spiral dynamics

What do we mean by self-management?

- The ability of a group to **organise, execute and review** its own processes without relying on external structures.
- It does not mean that "everyone does everything", but that everyone takes on clear roles based on their talents and availability.
- It requires a **culture of care**, active listening and continuous learning.

Some key methodologies:

- **Sociocracy**: proposes an organisation by interconnected decision-making circles, rotating roles and consent rather than rigid consensus.

  Resource: https://www.sociocracyforall.org

- **Spiral dynamics**: proposes non-linear processes, based on the rhythm of the group and the natural distribution of responsibilities according to moments, energies and needs.

  Inspiration: groups related to regenerative methodologies, permaculture, and distributed leadership.

Practical exercise: "Weaving our teams".

Estimated duration: 2h 30min

Participants: 10-40 persons

Objective: to reflect on how to organise ourselves collectively, to recognise talents and needs of the group, and to create care and management teams for the day-to-day running of the project.

Materials needed:

- Continuous paper or panel with cohousing functions
- Role cards and guiding questions
- Rope or wool
- Stickers or symbols
- Ample space to move around and create subgroups

Step by step

1. Collective landing (15 min)

Brief introduction to self-management and new forms of collective organisation. Key concepts are highlighted:

- Circularity

- Co-responsibility
- Flexibility
- Trust

Generating question:

> *What do I need to feel comfortable organising with others?*

2. Map of necessary functions (30 min)

The basic functions that any cohousing needs on a day-to-day basis are presented. For example:

- Logistics and
- care and attention
- Internal and communication
- Organisation of
- Facilitation of
- Accounts and economics

The group can add others according to their reality.

3. Body movement: Where does it resonate with me (30 min)?

- Each function is placed in a corner or area of the space.
- People move to the one with which they feel most in tune.
- In each area, reflection takes place:
    - What does this equipment need to work well?
    - What specific tasks does it require?
    - What talents or attitudes are valuable here?

4. Team building (30 min)

With the information shared, **first prototypes of self-managed teams** are formed.
Each team answers a sheet with key questions:

Powerful questions for each team:

- What tasks does our role include?
- How are we going to coordinate?
- What pace of meetings do we need?
- How will we know if we are doing it right?
- What do we need from the rest of the group to sustain this?
- What do we want to take special care of in this team?

5. Sharing and agreements (30 min)

Each team presents its proposals and commitments. Synergies and possible overlaps are identified.

The whole group validates and refines the agreements. It is proposed to create a **visible board of the teams**, with names of persons, review dates and references.

6. Symbolic closure (15 min)

Ritual with rope/wool: each team is connected to each other creating a symbolic web of interdependence.
Final round: *What do you take away from this way of organising? What motivates you to sustain it?*

What does this dynamic achieve?

- Clarity on what the group needs to function on a day-to-day basis.
- Equitable distribution of responsibilities according to real motivations.
- A sense of belonging, usefulness and co-responsibility.
- Basis for review and continuous improvement systems.
- Horizontal and collaborative organisational culture.

Guiding questions to facilitate reflection:

- What kind of team do you need to feel well cared for in the project?
- What can you offer with pleasure and without overexertion?
- What do you find most difficult to sustain when working in a group?
- How would you like the group to recognise your contribution?
- How do we turn teams from "fixed obligations" into living spaces?

Topic: Decision-making processes

Clarity, legitimacy and fluidity to sustain life together

In groups, conflicts do not usually arise from the decisions themselves, but from how they are made, who makes them and who feels (or does not feel) part of the process. A community that does not have a clear decision-making map ends up repeating hierarchical dynamics, demotivating its members or blocking collective progress.

This topic helps us to understand the different types of decisions that arise in cohousing, to explore the possible levels of delegation and to co-create a clear and adapted system that allows us to move forward with trust, autonomy and co-responsibility.



Conceptual framework: UNFIX + collective decision matrix

UNFIX is a modular and evolutionary organisational methodology, inspired by theories such as *Sociocracy 3.0*, *Teal organisations* and *agility*. It aims to help groups design living, decentralised and adaptive structures, without losing clarity and accountability.

🔗 More info: https://unfix.com

Types of decisions (by level of impact or scope):

Type of decision	Features
Strategic	They affect the overall direction, vision, partnerships, policies or direction of the project.
Tactical or operational	They have to do with concrete actions, tasks, times, execution.
Functional	They relate to the day-to-day running of each team (spaces, meals, communications, etc.).
Emerging	They arise spontaneously, require rapid responses or adaptations.

Levels of delegation (based on UNFIX and sociocracy):

Level	Type of participation	Who decides?
1	**Information**	One team informs the other of its decision.
2	**Consultation**	One team decides, in consultation with others.
3	**Consent**	It is proposed and adjusted until there are no relevant objections.
4	**Explicit delegation**	The group empowers another team to decide autonomously.
5	**Assembly or collective decision**	The whole group participates directly.

The challenge is not to choose an "ideal" one, but to know when to use which one.

Dynamics: "Our decision map".

Estimated duration: 2h 30min

Participants: 10-40 persons

Objective: to identify the types of decisions the group faces and agree on who makes them, how and with what level of participation or delegation.

Materials needed:

- Large mural or kraft paper
- Cards with examples of real or fictional decisions (Annex 3).
- Stickers, post-its, felt-tip pens
- Panel with the 5 levels of delegation and the 4 types of decisions
- Adhesive tape

Step by step

1. Introduction to the framework (20 min)

- The 4 types of decisions and the 5 levels of delegation are presented.
- They are explained with examples close to home:
    - Who decides if a new person joins cohousing?
    - Who decides whether to change the brand of oil in the group?

2. Whirlwind of decisions (30 min)

- In small groups, people write down decisions they have experienced, sensed or think the group will face.
- Each card must respond to:
    - What is the decision?
    - Who usually (or should) take it?
    - How has it been decided (or how would you like it to be)?

3. Collective map (45 min)

- A vertical axis (TYPE of decision) and a horizontal axis (LEVEL of delegation) are drawn.
- The cards are placed on the map, generating a visual mapping of the decision-making system.
- Patterns are analysed: are there many strategic decisions made with little participation, is there saturation in the assembly?

4. Reflection in teams or roles (30 min)

- Each group takes on a function of cohousing (food, spaces, activities, economy).
- They wonder:
    - What decisions do we have to make in this team?

- How are we going to take them? What level of autonomy do we need?
- How do we inform the rest?

5. Initial agreements (15 min)

- The group agrees on a first "draft decision-making system" by areas or levels.
- It is recorded on a mural or collaborative document.
- A review date is defined.

6. Closing with metaphor (10 min)

- It wonders:

  If our decision-making system were a means of transport... what would it be and why?

The general mood of the group is shared and collected.

What does this dynamic achieve?

- Clarity on who decides what, how and when.
- Preventing misunderstandings and "grey areas" of power.
- Fairer and more realistic distribution of responsibility.
- Culture of autonomy with connection.
- Living and revisable agreements, not carved in stone.

Guiding questions for facilitation

- What decisions are we currently taking informally... and what risks or benefits does this entail?
- What kind of decisions should be collective and what kind of decisions can be delegated to small groups or individuals?
- What criteria do we - or should we - use to decide who makes which decisions and how?
- Do we have clear mechanisms to review, evaluate and adjust our decisions over time?
- How do we ensure that all voices are present in the processes where it matters?

Topic: Conflict management

When something hurts...it can teach us

Conflicts are not a failure of the system: they are a natural part of any group process. They arise when there is tension between what a person needs and what happens in reality, when values are compromised or when not enough has been listened to.

Learning to deal with conflicts - instead of avoiding them, hiding them or exploding out of accumulation - is key to consolidating resilient, honest groups capable of sustaining coexistence.

This is where Nonviolent Communication (NVC) comes in, an approach that invites us to change the way we express ourselves and listen, developing a deep empathy for the needs behind every emotion.



Conceptual framework: Nonviolent Communication (NVC)

NVC, developed by Marshall Rosenberg, is based on the idea that all people share the same basic human needs, and that conflicts arise because of the way we try to satisfy them, not because of the needs themselves.

Its four fundamental steps:

1. **Observation without judgement**: What do I see, hear, perceive, without interpreting it?
2. **Feeling**: How do I feel about it?
3. **Need**: What need of mine is not being met?
4. **Concrete request**: What can I ask (of myself or someone else) to take care of this need?

CNV metaphors: the giraffe and the jackal

- **Giraffe** (the animal with the biggest heart on the savannah): listens, observes without judging, connects with its feelings and those of others.
- **The jackal**: speaks from criticism, demand, fear or automatic reaction.

The aim is not to eliminate the jackal, but to recognise it with affection and learn to speak more like giraffes.

Practical dynamics: "From conflict to learning".

Estimated duration: 2h 30min

Participants: 10-30 persons

Objective: to recognise how conflicts manifest themselves, to learn the steps of NVC and to practice new forms of expression and listening that strengthen bonds.

Materials needed:

- Jackal/giraffe phrase cards (Annex 4)
- Paper to draw emotions and needs
- Emotions and needs wheel, printed or projected (Annex 4).
- Symbolic corner: Giraffe space / Jackal space
- CNV sheets (templates with the 4 steps)

Step by step

1. Emotional landing (20 min)

A brief reflection on how conflicts are experienced in everyday life.
Open questions to the group:

How do you react when something doesn't go as expected?
What do you do when someone speaks to you in a way that upsets you?

2. Presentation of the CNV (30 min)

Visual and simple explanation of the 4 steps. The metaphors of the **jackal and the giraffe** are introduced with everyday examples.
Typical example:

- Jackal: "You always leave everything messy!"
- Giraffe: "When I see the dirty dishes (observation), I feel frustrated (feeling), because I need order in the house (need). Could you pick them up after using them (request)".

3. Transformation game (45 min)

- Jackal" phrases are handed out to each group.
- Your task is to **translate them into giraffe language** using the 4 steps.
- Then, they stage short scenes with both versions (jackal vs. giraffe).
- Open reflection: how does the energy of the group change, what emotions does each form arouse?

4. Guided practice with real conflict (30 min)

In pairs, each person recalls a recent situation of tension or discomfort (real or from the project).
With the help of an index card, they are invited to express it from the CNV, writing it down:

- What did you observe?
- What did you feel?
- What was the need behind it?
- What request could you have made?

Experiences are voluntarily shared in plenary.

5. Closing and learning (25 min)

The group draws up a **list of collective lessons learned** about conflict management.
This can be done in the form of a "coexistence agreements" mural, with sentences such as:

- "We are committed to speaking from our needs".
- "Let's listen without interrupting or judging".
- "We recognise that conflict can be an opportunity".

Final round:

What new way of communicating would you like to try the next time tension arises?

What does this dynamic achieve?

- Understand that conflicts are not a problem, but a symptom to be listened to.
- Practising concrete forms of empathetic and honest communication.
- Reduce misunderstandings and prevent conflicts in the group.
- Create a culture of care and healthy expression in cohousing.

💬 **Powerful questions to facilitate reflection:**

- How do you usually react when there is a disagreement in your group or environment?
- What prevents you from expressing what you need to clearly and calmly?
- What would help you feel listened to in difficult situations?
- How can we transform conflict into an opportunity for improvement?
- What would change if we saw conflicts as part of the process rather than mistakes?

Topic: Listening levels

Listening is not hearing: it is opening up to the other, to what is new... and to the future that wants to be born.

In groups, what is not heard is repeated. And what is half heard, is misinterpreted.

That is why working on conscious and deep listening is key for healthy relationships, so that conflicts do not become entrenched and - most importantly - so that we can access what has not yet been said, that which is wanting to emerge from the possible future.

Theory U, developed by Otto Scharmer (MIT), proposes that the quality of the results we generate is directly related to the quality of attention from which we operate. Therefore, if we change the way we listen, we can transform not only our relationships, but the way we co-create the future.



Conceptual framework: The 4 levels of listening (Otto Scharmer - U-Theory)

Listening level	What is	What characterises it	Example
Download (Regular listening)	We hear what we already know.	We confirm our prejudices or beliefs.	I know that", "It's always the same", "It's always the same".
Listening carefully	We listen to what is different.	We pay attention to what is new, to data.	"Ah, I hadn't thought of that!"
Empathic listening	We listen from the heart.	We put ourselves in the place of the other, we feel with.	"I can understand how you feel.
Generative listening	We listen from the emerging future.	We open ourselves to something new that does not yet exist, to what can become.	"What is this moment inviting us to be or to do?

Why is it important to recognise them?

- It helps us to detect at which level we tend to move and which we avoid.
- We can train the ability to listen beyond words.
- It allows us to generate spaces of trust, creativity and shared purpose.
- We connect with the "background" of the group and not only with its superficial dynamics.

Dynamics: "Listening to each other beyond the obvious".

Estimated duration: 2h - 2h 30min

Participants: 8-30 persons

Objective: to experience the different levels of listening, to recognise their effects and to practice empathic and generative listening.

Materials needed:

- Space in a circle
- Sheets or panel with the 4 levels (Annex 5)
- Templates for personal annotations
- Soft music for moments of reflection
- Candles, cushions or elements that help to create a caring atmosphere.

Step by step

1. Landing and context (15 min)

Theory U and the 4 levels of listening are presented with examples close to the group.

> *"Today we don't come just to talk: we come to listen to what we already know, what we didn't know, what others feel... and maybe something that doesn't yet exist.*

2. Experience by levels (60 min)

4 moments are proposed in pairs or trios where people talk for 5-7 minutes about the same question:

> *What brought me to this project and what do I want to contribute?*

Each round has an objective:

- **Round 1: discharge** → the person only listens to confirm what he/she believes.
- **Round 2: attention** → listen and try to notice what is new.
- **Round 3: empathy** → listening with the heart, feeling with the other person.
- **Round 4: generative** → listen with total openness, without waiting for answers, letting whatever wants to emerge appear.

After each round, you are invited to write down or share:

> *How did I feel as a speaker, and as a listener? What changed between rounds?*

3. Collective map of listening (30 min)

- In groups, key phrases or learnings are created for each level.
- A poster or panel with sample reflections is produced:
    - "When I listen out of prejudice, I miss nuances".
    - "Real listening changes the energy".
    - "Sometimes the most valuable thing is not in the words, but in the silences".

4. Integration (30 min)

A moment of shared silence or a conscious walk through the space is proposed. Then, in a circle, the final question is asked:

> *What do I need to listen more deeply to this group and to myself?*

What does this dynamic achieve?

- Recognise that there are different ways of listening, and not all are equally useful.
- Train deeper, more empathic and transformative listening.
- Nurture the links in the group and improve internal communication.
- Create an environment where new ideas and a shared future can emerge more strongly.

Powerful questions to work on listening levels:

- What kind of listening comes naturally to me, and which is more difficult?
- What prevents me from listening with my heart?
- When was the last time I felt that someone really listened to me?
- What kind of listening does this group need to evolve?
- What do I listen to when I don't expect to be right?

Technical aspects

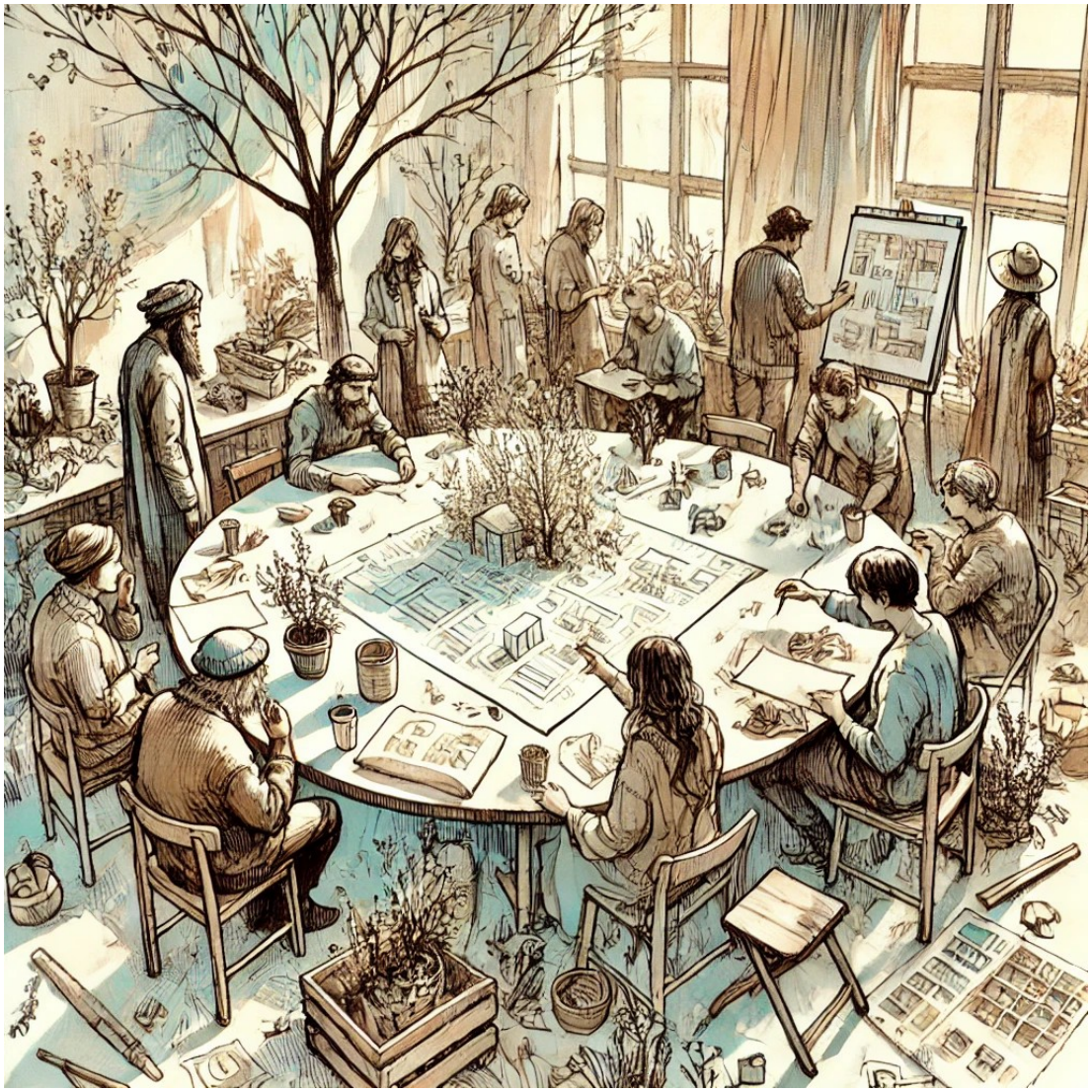
- What would a home that cares for people and the planet look like?
- Can we design common spaces together, and what about private spaces?
- What materials would we use if we were thinking 30 years ahead?
- What are the differences between a standard house and a house designed for living together?
- Where does design begin... and where did we just invent it by living?

Topic: Co-Design Approach

Designing together what we will later live together

In the architectural design of a cohousing, it is not enough for the building to be functional or technically sustainable. It has to respond to how we want to live, how we want to meet, take care of ourselves, move, rest, live together.

Co-design puts those who will inhabit the space at the centre, not only as end users but also as active agents in the process, capable of imagining, proposing and constructing solutions shared with the technical team.



Conceptual framework: technical-participatory co-design

What do we mean by co-design?

- It is a **collaborative methodology** that brings together technical and non-technical people in creative design processes.
- It is based on principles of **collective intelligence**, active listening and valuing lived experience.
- It integrates **physical, social, emotional and ecological** dimensions in the design of space.

In addition, from a sustainability and resilience perspective, the design must integrate aspects such as:

- Near-zero energy consumption (nZEB
- Bioclimatic and comfort
- Use of sustainable or materials
- Nature-based solutions (SBN
- Water and management
- Minimising the footprint
- Integration of the building into the social and environment

Good design is born out of a dialogue between dreams and calculations, between maps of desire and topographical maps.

Practical dynamic: "Dreaming and designing our spaces".

Estimated duration: 2h 30min

Participants: 10-40 persons

Objective: to identify the wishes, needs and priorities of the group for the design of a cohousing, differentiating individual, collective and common spaces, and integrating sustainability, accessibility and comfort criteria.

Materials needed:

- Blank plans of the space or basic layout
- Cards with types of spaces (rooms, kitchen, courtyard, laundry room, workshop, garden, etc.).
- Coloured Post-its
- Cardboard, marker pens, scissors, glue
- Symbolic elements or textures to represent ideas (wool, stones, wood, fabrics...)

Step by step

1. Introduction to co-design (15 min)

The objectives are briefly explained:

> *It is not about designing "the ideal house", but about understanding how we can live better together, in a conscious and sustainable way.*
> Some criteria are presented: energy use, materials, climatic comfort, accessibility, privacy vs. community, maintenance...

2. Brainstorming: How do we want to live (30 min)?

In small groups reflect on:

- What do we need individually in our homes to feel at home?
- What collective spaces do we want to have? What for?
- What environmental or sustainability aspects are important to us?

Ideas are written on post-its according to categories: INDIVIDUAL / COLLECTIVE / ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY.

3. Map of dreams (40 min)

Each group receives a blank plan or basic mock-up and places its ideas:

- They use cut-outs, symbols or drawings to represent the dreamed spaces.
- They also incorporate "intangible" desires (peace, silence, warmth, community, greenery...).

4. Proposals gallery and dialogue (30 min)

The designs of each group are presented.
A collective walk is carried out and questions of contrast are asked:

- What surprises us?
- What elements are repeated?
- What tensions do we see between desires and reality?
- How can we integrate different needs into a single project?

5. Synthesis and agreements (25 min)

A **"shared design manifesto"** is constructed, with phrases such as:

- We want a space that connects us to the land and to each other.
- Natural light is essential for us to feel alive.
- We need spaces to be quiet and others to make noise.
- The garden is not an extra: it is part of the heart of the project.

This document can be shared with the technical team to be integrated in subsequent phases.

What does this dynamic achieve?

- To make visible the dreams and priorities of those who will inhabit the space.
- Encouraging shared responsibility for what is being built
- Facilitating communication between the technical team and the community
- Integrating sustainability criteria from an experiential dimension
- Preventing future frustrations by aligning expectations and possibilities

Powerful questions to accompany co-design:

- What do you need to feel that "this place is yours"?
- What kind of spaces do you need to live together without losing privacy?
- How can the building accompany your physical, emotional and relational well-being?
- What would make this cohousing a sustainable place also in 20 years?
- What do you dream of happening in common spaces?

Topic: Materials and ecological sustainability

Making conscious choices about what will sustain our way of life

In a cohousing project, the materials we choose do not only build walls: they build relationships with the environment, with time, with our well-being and with future generations.

Making collective decisions about materials and construction systems involves integrating criteria of sustainability, health, durability, functionality and economy, without losing sight of the reality of available resources. It is not just a matter of "going green", but of understanding which materials best respond to our values, climate, territory and model of coexistence.



Conceptual framework: sustainable materials and associated criteria

What do we mean by ecological sustainability applied to materials?

- Locally sourced and low impact: locally extracted, processed or recycled materials.
- Low carbon life cycle: from production to disposal.
- Non-toxic and healthy: no harmful emissions, safe for people.
- High durability and minimum maintenance: noble or reusable materials.
- Compatible with passive systems: promote thermal insulation, breathability and comfort.

Working on this topic helps to:

- Aligning technical expectations with collective desires
- Making informed decisions on cost, durability and impact
- Incorporate knowledge on bio-construction, circular economy, energy efficiency and regenerative materials.

Types of materials and structures according to sustainability criteria:

Type of structure	Associated materials	Ecological advantages
Wood (CLT, light-frame)	FSC-certified local wood	Renewable, low carbon footprint, good insulator
Mixed wood-earth	Tapial, adobe, BTC	High thermal inertia, recyclable, breathable, breathable
Concrete and recycled steel	Prefabricated, reclaimed structures	Reuse of materials, durability
Natural fibres	Straw, hemp, cellulose	Excellent insulators, biodegradable, low-impact, low impact
Creative reuse	Reclaimed materials, pallets, doors	Circular economy, economic savings, aesthetic identity

Tools and techniques for incorporating sustainability criteria:

- Life Cycle Assessment (LCA) of materials (cradle to grave).
- Environmental Product Declarations (EPD) to compare materials.
- Design workshops with real materials or sensory mock-ups
- Routes of local materials and bio-construction fairs
- Comparative green budgets (initial cost vs. cost over 30 years).

Participatory dynamic: "Building with who we are".

Estimated duration: 2h 30min

Participants: 10-40 persons

Objective: to collectively reflect on what materials we want and need for our cohousing, and to agree on ecological sustainability criteria that will guide the choice of building solutions.

Materials required:

- Samples or tokens of real materials (images or fragments)
- Criteria wheels: cost, health, durability, environmental impact, aesthetics, comfort
- Prioritisation and decision-making panels
- Kraft paper, marker pens, stickers or sticky dots

Step by step

1. Initial inspiration (20 min)

Short presentation with images of sustainable materials and examples of cohousing built with them.
The main criteria for assessing materials (impact, cost, life cycle, maintenance...) are explained.

2. "Materials in the hand" workshop (30 min)

Hand out tokens or samples of different materials.
In small groups, each person chooses one and responds:

- *What sensations does this material arouse in me?*
- *Can I imagine it in my house?*
- *What values do I think it conveys?*

Answers are shared out loud.

3. Collective decision game: "the material traffic light" (40 min)

- Different technical solutions are presented: hemp vs. rock wool insulation, CLT structure vs. reinforced concrete, etc.
- Each group rates the materials with a criteria wheel (green/yellow/red).
- They are pasted into a collective panel to visualise preferences and priorities.

4. Consensus matrix (30 min)

Each group creates a matrix with:

- Desirable materials
- Possible materials

- Materials to avoid
- Materials for further research

A proposal for **minimum collective criteria for the choice of materials** is drawn up and shared.

5. Closure and commitment (20 min)

A selection of phrases is read as:

> *"Building with local wood is taking care of the nearby forest".*
> *"If the material gets sick, it is not sustainable"*
> *"Our home is also the planet"*

Final round:

> *What criteria would I like to see guiding every constructive decision in the project?*

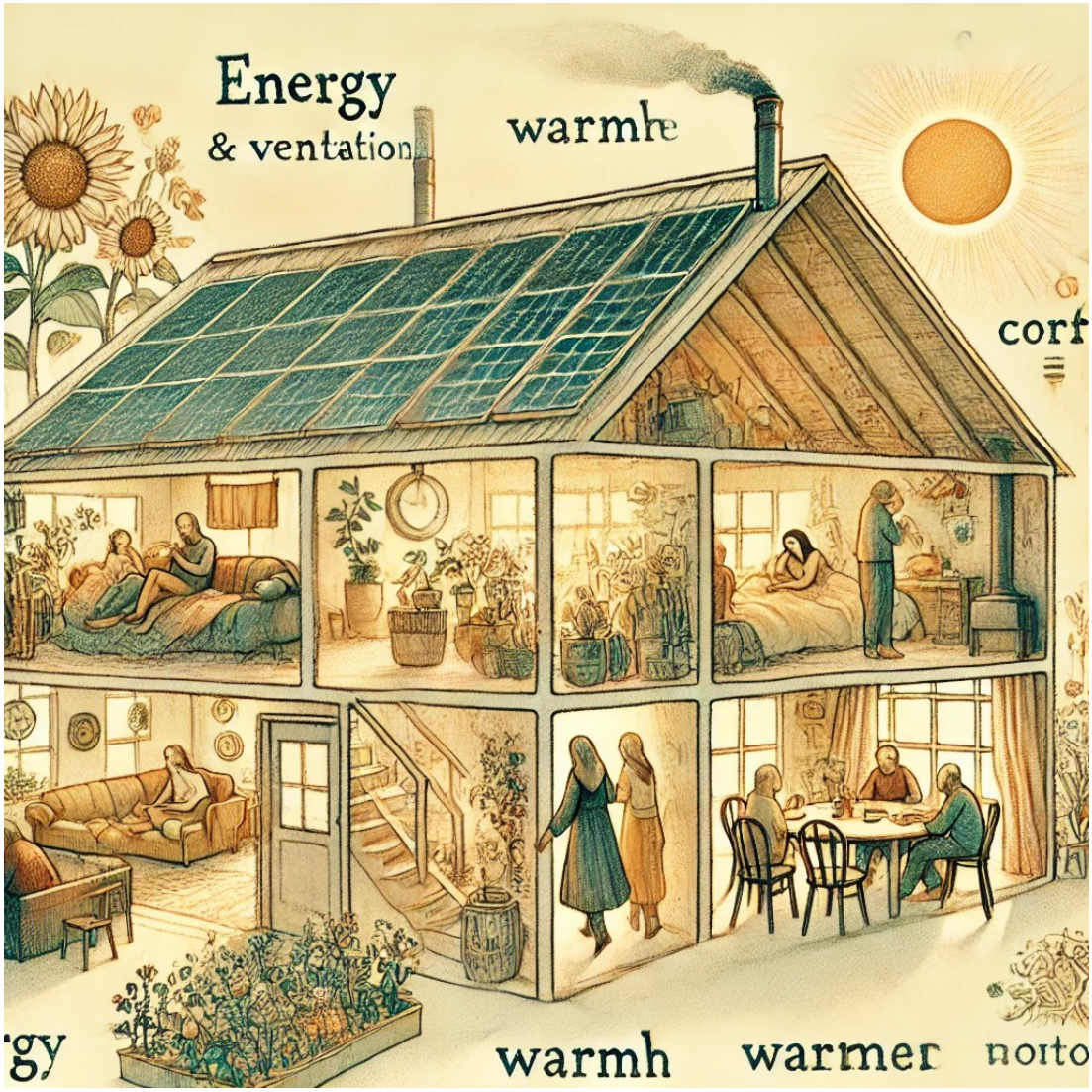
Powerful questions to guide the process:

- What materials make me feel a sense of wellbeing and connection with the environment?
- What impact do I want my house to have on the planet in the next 30 years?
- Where do we strike the balance between initial cost and long-term sustainability?
- What materials represent our values as a community?
- How can we include everyone in the group in these decisions, even if they are not experts?

Topic: Energy and comfort

Designing wellbeing from the energy that we generate, share and care for.

Energy is not just a cost to be managed: it is an everyday experience, a right, a living system that connects us to the planet, to comfort, to justice and to sustainability.



In a cohousing project, working on the energy strategy involves much more than installing solar panels or choosing efficient windows. It is about asking ourselves:

- How do we want to feel in our spaces?
- What decisions do we make so that our homes do not generate unnecessary emissions? What is the energy impact of our daily lives and how do we manage it as a community?

Thermal comfort, efficiency and energy self-production are design decisions, but also cultural and political ones.

Conceptual framework: energy, comfort and sustainability

Key dimensions:

1. Thermal comfort: stable and comfortable temperature, without the need for intensive use of mechanical systems.
2. Passive systems: architectural design that takes advantage of the sun, orientation, cross ventilation, thermal inertia, insulation.
3. Bioclimatic: adapting the building to its climate, topography, vegetation and orientation.
4. Energy efficiency: minimising consumption without sacrificing well-being (lighting, electrical appliances, air-conditioning systems).
5. Self-production and self-consumption: own electricity generation (photovoltaic, geothermal, aerothermal, etc.).
6. Energy communities: collective models of shared energy production, distribution and management among neighbours.
7. Energy health of the building: air quality, absence of humidity, materials without toxic emissions.

What do we mean by energy comfort?

- It's more than just not being cold or hot: it's about how you perceive the space, the light, the ventilation, the humidity.
- It includes silence, breathability, seasonal rhythm.
- It affects people's physical, emotional and relational health.
- It has an impact on the life cycle of the building, its maintenance and its ecological integration.

Participatory exercise: "Mapping the comfort we dream of".

Estimated duration: 2h - 2h 30min

Participants: 10-30 persons

Objective: to collectively reflect and decide what kind of comfort we want, what energy system can make it possible, and how it affects design, investment and community life.

Materials required:

- Sensory Comfort Map" panel
- Energy and passive technologies factsheets (Annex 6)
- Decision wheels with criteria: cost, environmental impact, autonomy, maintenance, etc.
- Kraft paper, post-its, coloured stickers

Step by step

1. Introduction and activation (20 min)

Short inspirational presentation with images and real examples:

- *What is a bioclimatic house?*
- *How does an energy community work?*
- *What technical decisions imply cultural or economic ones?*

2. Sensory exploration (30 min)

A dynamic is proposed where people move around the space and reflect on thematic stations:

- Natural light
- Temperature and ventilation
- Silence or acoustics
- Air and humidity
- Seasonal rhythms

Each person writes on post-its how they want to feel at home and sticks them on the "comfort map".

3. Solutions panel (40 min)

In groups, hand out sheets of possible technical solutions or passive strategies (south-facing windows, cross-ventilation, photovoltaics, geothermal, green roof, etc.).

Each group should place them on a board with the following axes:

- Environmental impact

- Initial cost
- Long-term cost
- Energy autonomy
- Maintenance

The tensions between desire, viability and sustainability are discussed.

4. Collective decision (30 min)

It is proposed to define, as a community:

- *What level of comfort do we want to achieve?*
- *What kind of solutions represent us the most?*
- *What values do we want to prioritise in energy design?*

A first draft of **shared criteria for the project's energy strategy** is elaborated.

5. Closing (20 min)

Final round with the question:

> *What energy decision would make me proud of this cohousing 10 years from now?*

Powerful questions to accompany the process:

- What does "feeling at home" mean to you?
- How much of the energy we consume could we generate together?
- What level of investment are we willing to take on for autonomy and sustainability?
- How do we balance the technical, the economic and the relational in energy design?
- What impact do we want to have as an energy community in the territory?

Topic: Progressive spaces

Designing for what we are... and for what we will be

Life changes. People grow up, grow old, get sick, have children, separate, lose mobility or gain autonomy. And yet most spaces are designed as if none of these things were happening.

Designing progressive spaces involves anticipating transformation, imagining not only how people live today, but also how uses and needs might evolve in the next 5, 10 or 20 years. It is not about predicting the future, but allowing space to accompany it with dignity, flexibility and care.

This includes:

- Possibilities for functional and physical adaptation of the space.
- Facilitating dignified ageing processes and end-of-life care.
- Create conditions for childbirth, upbringing and family expansion.
- Spaces that can grow, divide or transform according to the people who inhabit them.



Conceptual framework: evolutionary design and life-cycle architecture

What do we mean by progressive spaces?

- They are spaces that are neither closed nor defined in their definitive form: they admit evolution, enlargement, reduction or transformation.
- They incorporate time as an architectural dimension: not only present use, but also possible futures.
- They are designed with a life-cycle view, both individual and community.

Examples:

- Dwellings that allow rooms to be easily divided or joined.
- Bedrooms that can be converted into a study, care space or companion space.
- Common areas designed to be places for play, care, mourning or celebration.
- Modular or expandable houses.
- Wide corridors allow for beds or wheelchairs if necessary.
- Visitors' rooms, which can be support or care rooms.

Participatory dynamic: "Living the space with the passage of time".

Estimated duration: 2h 30min

Participants: 10-30 persons

Objective: to imagine how our lives change over time and how space can accompany these transformations from a logic of care, dignity and adaptability.

Materials needed:

- Time line (drawn on long paper or string on the ground)
- coloured cardboard (for life cycles, life moments)
- Modifiable housing templates (cardboard, cards, mock-ups)
- Post-its, felt-tip pens, symbolic figures (stickers, mini-objects)

Step by step

1. Introduction and activation (20 min)

Presentation of the concept: *"We design not only for who we are today, but for who we will be tomorrow"*.
Visual examples of adaptable, modular, progressively designed dwellings are shown.

2. Lifeline dynamics (40 min)

- A time line is drawn on the ground (0 to 90 years).
- Each person places post-its at relevant life moments:
    - *Birth / Upbringing / Active life / Ageing / Caregiving /*
- Common moments are grouped, discussed and questions are raised:
    - What do we need right now?
    - What kind of spaces could sustain us in each phase?

3. Progressive design (60 min)

In groups, they are given a basic housing template or simple model.
They have to propose adaptations over time:

- What changes if the person gets older?
- What if a son or daughter arrives?
- What if there is a loss?
- What if one person joins temporarily?

Each group makes a "time travel" presentation of their proposal:

> *"Our house in year 1 was like this... in year 10 it had to be adapted because of..."*

4. Collective synthesis (20 min)

They are collected in a shared mural:

- Key proposals for adaptability.
- Design criteria arising from experience.
- Phrases such as:
    - "Space must grow with me".
    - "I don't want my old age to drive me out of my home".
    - "To design well is to care for those who have not yet arrived".

5. Reflective closure (10 min)

Quick round:

> *What design decision could change your life 20 years from now?*

What does this dynamic achieve?

- Making the passage of time visible as part of the design.
- Include future needs (maternity, care, mobility) from the outset.
- Making space a place that **accompanies life processes, not limits them**.
- Integrating functional, relational and emotional diversity in architectural design.
- Prevent costly reforms, unnecessary displacement or exclusions.

Powerful questions to guide the process:

- What spaces will hold me when I can't move the same way?
- What would my home need if I were to welcome an unexpected daughter or grandchild?
- What do I want my space to look like when I live my duels?
- What does it mean to grow old or die in community?
- What isn't often thought about design... and could it make all the difference?

Economy and sustainability

- Is it possible to live better by sharing more and spending less?
- How can we organise ourselves economically without excluding anyone?
- What does "non-profit cooperative" mean in practice?
- Can we create a solidarity fund among those of us who live together?
- What formulas are there for financing without mortgaging our dreams?

Topic: Budget and implementation

Understand how much what we want costs... to decide how to make it happen.

One of the main challenges in cohousing projects is to understand and manage the real costs of the project. It is not enough to have an overall number: we need to understand how that number is constructed, what is included and what is not, and how it affects our decisions.

Working collectively on the budget makes it possible:

- Aligning expectations with real possibilities.
- Make more informed decisions.
- Prioritise without losing sight of the whole.
- Prevent frustration, cost overruns and over-reliance on technical equipment.



Conceptual framework

What is the PEM (Material Execution Budget)?

This is the **cost of the work**: the cost of constructing the building "on site", excluding taxes and other professional services.
It includes:

- Labour
- Materials
- Auxiliary means
- Subcontracts
- Security
- Basic facilities

Approximate cost references per m² (as of 2024):

- Basic and efficient housing (bio-construction, without basement): 1,100 - 1,400 €/m².
- Housing with Passivhaus standards / high energy efficiency: 1,500 - 1,800 €/m².
- Simple common spaces (laundry, multi-purpose room): 900 - 1,200 €/m².
- Technical spaces (workshops, basements, garages): 700 - 1,000 €/m².

What is the PEC (Contract Execution Budget)?

The **PEC** is the result of adding the profits and overheads applied by the construction company to the EMP:

- Overheads: 13-15% Overheads: 13-15% Overheads: 13-15% Overheads: 13-15
- Industrial profit: 6-8% Industrial profit: 6-8% Industrial profit: 6-8% Industrial profit: 6-8% Industrial profit: 6-8

Usual formula:
PEC = PEM + (13-15%) + (6-8%).
Approximately: PEC ≈ PEM × 1,20

What does the total investment budget include?

From the PEC, other items have to be added to get the real total budget of the project. These are detailed here with their approximate percentages:

Concept	% of estimated total
EMP (constructed work)	60-65%
Overheads and profit (builder)	10-15%
Basic and execution project (architecture)	5-7%

Concept	% of estimated total
Site management, safety coordination	2-3%
Geotechnical survey, topographical survey, certifications	1-2%
Municipal licences (ICIO, licence, fees...)	2-4%
VAT (varies per item: 10% on site, 21% on technicians)	8-12%
Notary, legal and financial costs	1-2%
Other (insurance, contingencies, reserves)	2-3%
TOTAL INVESTMENT (general estimate)	100%

Dynamics: "Let's design the real cost of our cohousing".

Estimated duration: 2h 30min

Participants: 10-40 persons

Objective: to collectively simulate the design of a cohousing project (housing + common spaces), estimate surfaces and typologies, and build a complete investment budget understanding each item.

Materials:

- Reference table of costs per m² (according to type of space)
- Budget line items fiches
- Symbolic banknotes (fictitious money)
- Calculators, panels or Excel
- Templates with total built-up area

Step by step

1. Didactic introduction (20 min)

Brief visual explanation: What is the EMP, the SGP and the total budget?
Each group is given a template with:

- Types of space
- Indicative costs €/m²
- Possible surfaces

2. Project design (45 min)

In groups, a small simulated project is designed:

- No. of dwellings (20, 30, 40...)
- House types (60 m², 80 m², 100 m²)

- Communal areas (laundry, dining room, workshop, vegetable garden, etc.)
- Technical spaces or services

They calculate:

- Total built-up area
- Estimated EMP cost
- Apply the factors to arrive at the JEP
- Add the remaining items until the total budget is estimated.

3. Visual Decision Map (30 min)

Each group pastes its budget on a comparative mural. They point out:

- *What is more expensive and why?*
- *What has been sacrificed or prioritised?*
- *What difference does it make if we use wood, straw, industrialised structure...?*

4. Debate on realism and possibilities (30 min)

Reflection:

- *Is it viable with own resources or does it require external funding?*
- *How much of the budget could we take on assisted self-build?*
- *How to reduce the budget without losing quality and value?*

5. Closing and learning (25 min)

Each group shares 3 key take-away ideas on how to understand and economically design cohousing.

> Final question: *What would you do differently if you had to make economic decisions today for your collective housing?*

Powerful questions:

- What part of the budget do you consider to be indispensable?
- What would help you decide with confidence about such an investment?
- Where are the margins of adjustment and where are they not?
- Are we aligning our values with our investments?
- What role can self-management or self-construction play in this?

Topic: Investment and financial sustainability

From collective budgeting to individual commitment: how to sustain what we dream about

Being clear about the total investment budget is a key step. But the real challenge is to turn that budget into a sustainable financial plan for all the people who will be living in the cohousing.

It is not just about paying for the work:

- Who can afford what cost?
- What economic effort does this represent in the short, medium and long term?
- What formulas for sustainability, solidarity or redistribution can we imagine?

Financial sustainability is not just a question of numbers: it is also a question of equity, personal viability and collective health.



Conceptual framework: What is financial sustainability in cohousing?

An investment is financially sustainable when:

- It can be borne by the people involved without compromising their essential economic well-being.
- It has a clear plan for fair cost sharing.
- It has a strategy to deal with adjustments, risks and unforeseen events.
- It is reviewed and updated at each stage of the project.
- Integrate mechanisms for internal solidarity or mutual support where necessary

From collective investment to the cost per person or household unit

The total budget of the project should be transformed into:

1. Cost per dwelling unit / cohousing
2. individual or family contribution
3. Possible payment or financing plan (down payment, monthly instalments, flexible instalments, loans, etc.

Variables to be taken into account:

- Built-up area per unit
- Proportional use of common spaces
- Involvement in design decisions affecting cost
- Actual financial capacity of each unit
- Possible subsidies, grants or external investments
- Future scenarios: inflation, increase in materials, delays, etc.

Practical keys:

- Any cost-sharing must have clear criteria for
- What seems feasible today may not be feasible tomorrow: have to be envisaged.
- A flexible and revisable cost structure allows for more
- Do not take decisions with "best of luck" as the assumption.
- Architectural decisions have a direct impact on viability

Dynamic: "Can we sustain this dream?"

Estimated duration: 2h 30min

Participants: 10-30 persons

Objective: to collectively calculate the cost that will fall on each living unit in different scenarios, and to reflect on the individual and collective financial sustainability of the project.

Materials required:

- Template with overall budget breakdown
- Sheet with surface areas, typologies and number of dwellings.
- Household sheets: income, possible contributions, fears, doubts (Annex 7)
- Shared calculator / Excel sheet
- Scenario cards (optimal, moderate, complex)

Step by step

1. Presentation and simulation (20 min)

Review the total project budget.
Divide the budget by the number of units.
Consider apportionment formulas:

- Per m²
- By use coefficient
- With corrections for needs or possibilities

2. Financial simulation groups (45 min)

Each group receives a "typical household" with a different income and family situation.
They have to decide:

- *How much can they provide as an initial input?*
- *What monthly payment could they afford? For how many years?*
- *What happens if there is a 10% cost overrun?*

3. Sustainability panel (30 min)

Each group presents its case. A visual panel is constructed with:

- Households that can take on the model
- Households at risk
- Options to redeploy, support or adapt

4. Designing a collective adjustment system (30 min)

It is proposed to create a table with possibilities:

- Internal Solidarity Fund
- Deferred contributions
- Group loans
- Partial self-construction
- Reduction of surface area
- Adjustments of common spaces

5. Closing and reflection (25 min)

Final round with the question:

> *What would it take for you to feel that you can sustain this project without fear and anxiety?*

Key ideas are encouraged to be collected for the next phases of the project.

Powerful questions:

- Could you take on this project today without compromising your personal stability?
- How could we create a system that includes those who have less?
- What values should guide the economic distribution among the group?
- What if a person has to leave halfway through, how do we deal with it financially?
- What mechanisms would help us sleep soundly, knowing that the project is sustainable?

Topic: Own and external financing

How do we get the money to build a project that belongs to all of us?

A cohousing project is not financed with wishes, but with concrete resources. That is why it is key to understand what types of funding exist, how they are combined, what implications they have and how they affect the group, both collectively and individually.

In addition, many people come to these processes with fears, doubts or myths about financing (loans, guarantees, quotas, etc.). The more transparent the path, the more we will be able to make conscious, realistic and sustainable decisions.



Conceptual framework: what is equity and external financing?

Own financing

This is the money that **comes from the people involved in the project**, either individually or collectively.

Common forms:

- Initial contributions (compulsory or voluntary)
- Monthly contributions to the reserve fund
- Contributions in work or self-construction
- Income from the transfer of common areas
- Support from partners (NGOs, foundations, etc.)

Advantages:
✅ Greater autonomy.
✅ Reduced dependence on banks
✅ Strengthened commitment

Disadvantages:
❌ Can lead to inequalities if not well managed.
❌ Requires internal solidarity mechanisms

External funding

This is money that comes from **sources outside the group**, usually with a commitment to repay.

Common forms:

- Bank or cooperative (ethical banking, foundations) loans
- Public subsidies
- Investment by social entities
- Community financing (crowdfunding, solidarity lending)

Advantages:
✅ Allows for large investments
✅ Access to capital at key stages
✅ Can be accompanied by technical support

Disadvantages:
❌ Involves collective debt.
❌ Requires collateral and guarantees
❌ Can impose external rhythms or conditions

The challenge of the transfer of use and the pooling of resources

Many cohousings are organised as cooperatives, where people are not individual owners, but have access to the use of the dwelling indefinitely as

long as they participate in the project.
This model has social advantages, but it is a challenge in terms of financing, because:

- No individual property as collateral for banking
- The loan is granted to the entire cooperative, not to individuals.
- Joint and several liability is required: all persons are liable collectively

This requires:

- Strong relationships of trust
- Pre-loan contributions
- Transparent financial model
- Active search for specialised institutions (Fiare, Coop57, La Dinamo, Triodos, etc.).

Types of contributions needed to sustain funding

Depending on the type of project, it may be required:

- **Initial contribution** (share capital or reserve) → 10-25% of the cost of the house
- **Monthly instalments** → repayment of the group loan
- **Reserve fund** → for contingencies, maintenance or internal solidarity
- **Deferred or progressive contribution** → in the case of persons with less immediate capacity

The design of these inputs should be:

- Of course
- Progressive
- Revisable
- Aligned with group values

Dynamics: "How do we finance our future?"

Estimated duration: 2h - 2h 30min

Participants: 10-30 persons

Objective: to understand the difference between equity and external funding, to visualise its implications, and to co-design a crowdfunding strategy adapted to the reality of the group.

Materials needed:

- Funding sources fiches
- Budget simulator (real or fictitious)
- Panel with benefits and risks

- Chart to build a "funding pizza".
- Kraft paper, index cards, markers

Step by step

1. Conceptual landing (20 min)

The key concepts are presented: own vs. external financing, transfer of use, joint liability.

2. Financial design workshop (45 min)

In groups, each team receives a cohousing case with:

- Total budget
- No. of dwellings and living units
- Diverse economic situations

They have to decide:

- *How much of this is covered by own funding and how much by external funding?*
- *How is funding shared between individuals?*
- *What risks are there and how are they covered?*

3. Financing graph (30 min)

Each group draws its "funding pizza":

- Personal contribution
- Bank loan
- Public support
- Pooled fund
- Other

They compare the graphs between groups.

4. Scenarios and reactions (30 min)

Facilitation introduces variables:

- A person is unable to pay his or her dues
- Bank requires more collateral
- There is a subsidy but with conditions

Each group should adjust their strategy and explain how they react.

5. Closing and commitments (25 min)

Each group writes down a key phrase or decision that should guide their funding strategy.
Closing round:

What gives me confidence and what gives me vertigo when I think about how we are going to finance this project?

Powerful questions:

- Which type of financing gives me the most confidence, and which one worries me?
- Are we willing to take on collective debt, under what conditions?
- How do we design a fair, viable and flexible contribution system?
- What happens if someone is late or unable to pay?
- What role can ethical banking or public institutions play in this project?

Topic: Net Present Value (NPV) and Return on Investment (ROI)

Understanding the value of what we invest ... now and in the future

When we talk about building cohousing, the investment is not limited to the present moment. It involves a long-term commitment, and that is why we need tools that help us compare the value of the investment with the return it generates over time.

Both Net Present Value (NPV) and Return on Investment (ROI) allow us to answer key questions:

- Is this investment worthwhile in the medium and long term?
- What are the benefits and when does it pay off?
- Can we compare it with other alternatives (traditional rental, individual mortgage, etc.)?

These tools are not only useful for the economic management of the group, but also for discussions with funding bodies or public administrations seeking to understand the economic impact of their support.



Conceptual framework

What is Net Present Value (NPV)?

It is a tool that allows us to know how much an investment that will generate future profit flows is worth today.
It helps us to compare what we invest now with what we save or gain over time (by not paying rent, by having self-consumption of energy, etc.).

> Basic formula:
> NPV = Expected future profits (discounted) - initial investment

If the NPV is positive, the investment is profitable.
If it is negative, it is not.

What is Return on Investment (ROI)?

This is a simpler indicator that measures the percentage return on investment.

> Basic formula:
> ROI = (Net Profit / Total Investment) × 100

It helps us to know what the return on our investment will be, whether in terms of savings, social value creation or long-term economic sustainability.

Practical example:

Let's assume a cohousing with an initial investment per housing unit of €160,000.
Each unit saves, on average, €600/month in rent (€7,200/year).
In addition, there are energy savings of €400/year from self-consumption.
Total annual benefits: 7,600 €/year

> In 25 years:
> 7.600 × 25 = 190.000 €

Discounting 2% annual inflation/average:
NPV ≈ 140,000 €.

Then:

- NPV = 140,000 - 160,000 = -20,000 → Does not recover full value if only money is considered
- But... if we value community life, stability, health, dignified ageing... the "social NPV" up.

Estimated ROI without discount:
ROI = (190,000 - 160,000) / 160,000 × 100 = 18.75%.

Dynamic: "Is it worth what we are investing?"

Estimated duration: 2h

Participants: 10-30 persons

🎯 **Objective: to** understand and calculate in a simple way the NPV and ROI of a cohousing project, integrating economic, environmental and social value.

🔧 **Materials:**

- Calculators or basic Excel
- Economic scenario sheets (renting, cohousing, mortgage) (Annex 8).
- Large paper, marker pens, printed Excel charts
- Labels for marking "economic benefits", "social benefits", "costs".

Step by step

1. Activation and context (15 min)

> *What are we gaining and what are we giving up by living in cohousing?*

NPV and ROI are explained in clear language and examples.

2. Group calculation workshop (45 min)

Each group receives an index card with:

- Initial investment (per dwelling)
- Estimated annual savings (rent, energy, health, mobility...)
- Project lifetime (20-30 years)

They calculate:

- ROI
- NPV (a simplified table can be used with a discount rate of 2% p.a.)

3. Mapping of non-economic returns (30 min)

Each group draws up a cardboard on which they add the non-monetary benefits:

- Shared care
- Social network
- Security in old age
- Time gained
- Housing stability
- Savings on transport

They are presented in plenary as **social or ecological ROI**.

4. Comparison with other models (20 min)

The results are contrasted with the costs of:

- Private rental for 30 years
- Mortgaged purchase
- Assisted living for the elderly

Which is more profitable in the long term? Economically? Vitally?

5. Closing and reflection (10 min)

Final round:

What new insight do I take away about what what we are (or are not) building is worth?

Powerful questions:

- What do you value most in what you are going to invest?
- What part of the return cannot be measured in euros?
- How much does your peace of mind or your children's peace of mind cost?
- Could you explain the return of the project to someone who doesn't believe in it?
- What if the highest ROI was shared care?

Legal aspects

- Who is an "owner" in cohousing and what does not own it imply?
- What types of ownership exist and how do they affect us?
- What is the role of land and the transfer of use?
- What happens if a person wants to leave the project?
- How do we armour the collective spirit against the passage of time?

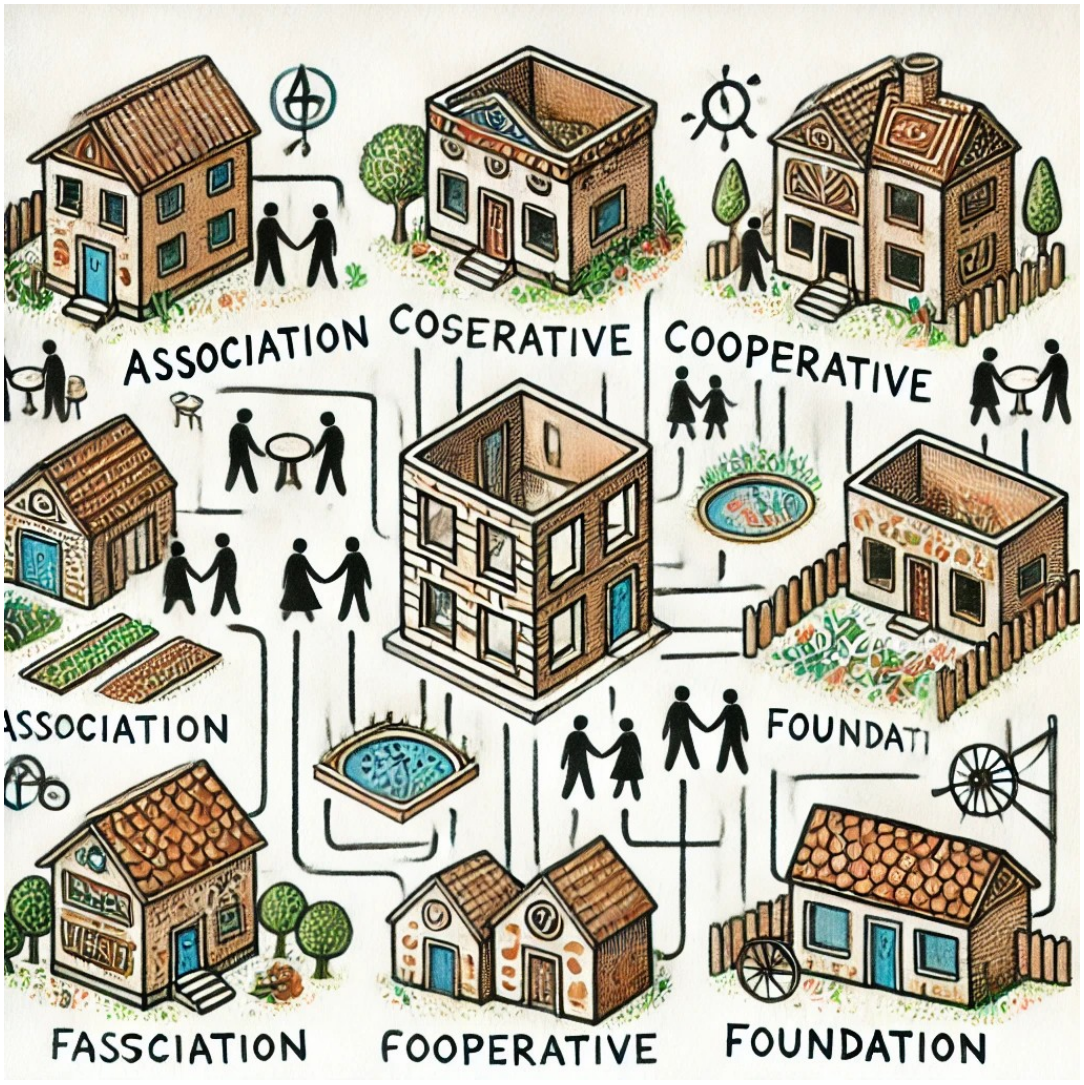
Topic: Diversity of legal forms

What legal form do we need to make our collective dream viable?

Choosing the legal form is one of the most important structural decisions in any cohousing project. It is not just a matter of "paperwork", but of defining how the group is organised, what rights and obligations its members have, how to access funding or land, and how to ensure long-term legal sustainability.

The legal figure:

- Defines the type of relationship between the people and the
- Marks the ability to take legal action and access
- Determines the degree of individual and responsibility
- It is key to qualifying for public land, subsidies or funding.



Conceptual framework: legal forms applicable to cohousing projects

Main legal figures

Below is a table with the most common figures, their advantages, limitations and key aspects:

Legal figure	Advantages	Disadvantages	Suitability for cohousing
Association	Easy to set up, voluntary participation, non-profit making	Cannot take on large real estate transactions or loans	Useful in previous phases of dynamisation or representation.
Limited company (S.L.)	Entrepreneurship, ownership of assets, access to loans	Mercantile purpose, taxed on profits, more "capitalistic" relationships	Unsuitable unless you want to professionalise management or operate services.
Foundation	Enables the collection of donations and management of assets for social purposes.	Requires initial endowment, public oversight, not very participatory	Useful if you are looking to protect wealth or raise funds for the long term.
Cooperative (housing cooperative, housing cooperative, mixed cooperative)	Democratic, not-for-profit, allows collective ownership, access to public land	Requires ongoing management, pooling of responsibility, possible operational complexity	The most common and coherent form of cohousing values
Community of property / joint ownership	Simplicity between individuals, without legal entity	High personal liability, limited scalability	Useful only for small groups, without collective ambition.

Key elements to consider when choosing a legal form

1. Number of people and level of
2. degree of formalisation
3. Ability to take on loans and operate
4. Relationship to land and ownership
5. Existence or non-existence of transfer of
6. Eligibility for public land or
7. Level of professionalisation (site management, rentals, etc.
8. Desire to ensure the permanence of the model over
9. Legal liability: individual, joint and several or liability

A key point: How does the legal form affect the transfer of use and access to public land?

- The cooperative in cession of use is the most widely used form in Europe for cohousing projects with collective ownership and long-term affordable housing.
- It allows ownership to be separated from use, avoiding speculation.
- They tend to have better access to ethical financing and to agreements with administrations for the transfer of public land.

What kind of liability does each legal form entail?

Legal figure	Responsibility of participants
Association	Null or limited, except for malpractice in governing bodies
S.L.	Limited to the capital provided
Foundation	Null if there is no direct management (there is a board of trustees with strict rules).
Cooperative	**Joint and several** in the case of loans: the partners are jointly liable
Community of property	**Joint and several and unlimited**: each person is liable with his or her personal assets.

In cooperatives, if there are no preventive mechanisms (insurance, solidarity fund, guarantees), **a default can affect the whole group.**

Dynamics: "What legal form are we... or do we want to be?

Estimated duration: 2h

Participants: 10-30 persons

Objective: to learn about the main legal forms, their implications, and to become aware of which may be most appropriate for the group according to its objectives, values and possibilities.

Materials needed:

- Information sheets for each legal figure (Annex 9)
- Key questions roundtable (participation, ownership, accountability, taxation, access to finance)
- Comparative tables
- Spaces by "legal form" in the room
- Role-play or practical simulations

Step by step

1. Introduction (20 min)

The legal figures are presented in a clear way, with comparisons and examples of real cohousings using each model.

2. Decision role-play (45 min)

Each group is situated in a legal figure and responds to a series of challenges:

- We want to take out a loan. Who signs?
- Public land is being offered, can we get access to it?
- A person wants to leave. How do you recoup your investment?
- There is internal conflict: who has the right to decide?

After the role-play, each group discusses what advantages and tensions they experienced.

3. Circle of choice and values (30 min)

The different legal figures are marked in the space.
Each person moves towards the one they think they represent best:

- The values of the group
- The feasibility of the project
- The balance between participation and management

A group discussion is opened:

> *Which legal form do we need today, and which do we dream of having in 10 years' time?*

4. Closing (15 min)

Quick round with the question:

> *What would I like to ask an expert before deciding on the legal form of our cohousing?*

Powerful questions:

- How much responsibility am I willing to take for the project?
- Do we want to be owners, users or managers of the project?
- Which legal structure best reflects our values and how we organise ourselves?
- What would be the implications of each option in case of conflict, non-payment or exit from the project?
- How can we protect the essence of the project beyond the regulations?

Topic: Types of partners

Designing for diversity: who we are, who we need and how we organise ourselves

A cohousing project is not only made by those who will live in it. There are multiple actors involved: inhabitants, social entities, city councils, technicians, ethical investors, neighbourhood networks...
Understanding and structuring this diversity is essential to create a strong community, connected to its environment and with a real impact beyond its walls.



Defining well the types of project partners allows:

- Share responsibilities and capacities well.
- Recognise and value all forms of contribution.
- Avoid confusion about role, decision-making power or rights.
- Open the door to collaboration with local entities and actors.
- Careful balance between autonomy and openness.

Conceptual framework: what is a "partner" in cohousing?

In the context of a housing cooperative in cession of use (the most common model), a member is a person who is legally part of the cooperative, with a voice and a vote, and with certain rights and duties.

However, there can be different types of partners or participants depending on the degree of involvement, their role or the value they bring:

Typical types of members:

Type of member	Main features	Possible rights and responsibilities
Housing partner	You will reside in the cohousing	Right of use, full participation, principal financial contribution
Collaborating partner	Non-resident, but supports and participates in the cooperative	Voice in assemblies, lesser vote, solidarity or financial contribution
Ethical investor partner	Provides capital without residency or involvement in day-to-day management	Defined economic rights, without direct intervention
Institutional partner / entity	NGO, foundation, administration or social enterprise involved	You can participate in bodies, provide technical support, or provide land
Partner in training	Interested person, not yet resident and not yet decided	Access to processes, with no or limited voting until formalisation

What does each type of member bring to the table?

- Diversity of contributions: economic, social, cultural, technical.
- Resilience and flexibility of the project in the face of unforeseen events.
- Link with the neighbourhood, associations and public networks.
- Specialised financial or technical support.
- Potential to generate impact beyond the residential sphere.

And how does this affect the legal and organisational level?

- The **statutes** of the co-operative must clearly state this:
  - What types of members are there?
  - What rights and obligations they have
  - How they join or leave
  - How governance is distributed (voting, presence in assemblies, commissions, etc.)
- There should also be mechanisms for:
  - Avoid concentration of power
  - Balancing decisions between residents and non-dwellers
  - Bringing new people on board without defeating the purpose

Dynamics: "Who is part of our project?

Estimated duration: 2h

Participants: 10-30 persons

Objective: to identify all the profiles that are or can be part of the project, recognise their contributions, define their role and design a balanced model of participation.

Materials needed:

- Possible types of membership sheets (Annex 10)
- Templates for describing inputs and needs
- Kraft paper, marker pens, string or wool
- Physical or symbolic map of cohousing and its ecosystem

Step by step

1. Open brainstorming (20 min)

Who is already involved in the project and who else could be?
All identified actors are listed on a panel.

2. Relationship map (40 min)

An outline is drawn on the floor with the centre (living group) and concentric circles.
People are placed in different rings to:

- Residents
- Partner entities
- Funders
- Technicians
- Administration

- Neighbourhood community

Each one is connected with threads to represent relationships, dependencies, conflicts, contributions...

3. Categorisation and roles (30 min)

In small groups, choose 1 type of partner and answer:

- What does it bring?
- What do you need?
- What rights should I have?
- What limits should be set?

A draft typology of project partners is shared and elaborated.

4. Equilibrium in the ecosystem (20 min)

It is discussed:

- What types of members are over-represented?
- Who do we need to integrate better?
- What figures are missing to take care of the whole ecosystem of the project?

5. Closing and agreements (10 min)

> *What people or entities do I need to invite to this project for it to make sense in the long term?*

Powerful questions:

- Who is entitled to be part of the project and under what conditions?
- How do we balance decision-making between those who live and those who don't?
- What do we value more: financial contribution, commitment or shared vision?
- How do we protect diversity without losing cohesion?
- Are we leaving someone out who would be key to the sustainability of the project?

Topic: Governance and ownership

How do we make decisions together... and what does it really mean to "own" cohousing?

When we talk about governance, we talk about how decisions are made, power is shared and disagreements are resolved. And when we talk about ownership, we are not just talking about the legal, but about how we relate to the project as something we feel we own, share and care for.

This issue begs the question:

- Who decides? How and when?
- Who has power... and why?
- How do you protect the collective without erasing the individual?
- What does it mean to "own" something that belongs to everyone?



Conceptual framework: governance and collective ownership

What is governance?

Governance is the set of rules, structures, processes and dynamics we use to organise ourselves and make decisions. In cohousing, it usually combines:

- General Assembly
- Commissions or thematic circles
- Management or coordination teams
- Participation and conflict resolution mechanisms

Good governance not only "works", but also cares for cohesion, distributes power fairly and adapts to change.

What is collective ownership?

In cohousing, especially in co-operative models of shared use, the concept of ownership is transformed:

- The cooperative is the owner of the
- Members are not individual owners, but have the right of indefinite use, as long as they comply with the principles and commitments of the group.
- Housing cannot be sold, inherited or rented freely: it is protected as a .

This:
✅ Prevents speculation
✅ Guarantees permanence
✅ Encourages co-responsibility

🌱 Inspiring advanced governance models

🔹 Sociocracy

- Organisation in circles
- Decisions by consent (no reasoned objection
- Rotational and defined roles
- Transparency and continuous improvement

🔹 TEAL Organisations (Frederic Laloux)

- Governance based on autonomy, evolutionary purpose and
- Self-management without formal hierarchies
- Decentralised decisions with consultation and accountability

🔹 Spiral dynamics

- Fluid processes, no rigid structure
- Adapting to the energy and timing of the group

- They take shape around emerging needs
- Ideal for small groups and under construction

Keys to designing a governance model

- Have **clear but not structures**
- Encourage **rotation of roles and**
- Include all people, but **do not force all people to decide on**
- Design **different spaces for different topics** (decision, emotional, review, planning).
- Define how **the assembly, working groups and roles** relate to each other**.**
- Establish **delegation** mechanisms **with trust and .**

Dynamics: "Governing what we feel is ours".

Estimated duration: 2h - 2h 30min

Participants: 10-30 persons

Objective: to collectively experiment and build a governance and ownership model that reflects the values, needs and complexities of the group.

Materials:

- Cards with governance models (sociocracy, TEAL, spiral, traditional). Annex 11
- Decision wheels (topics: economic, technical, emotional, everyday)
- Symbolic roles: spokesperson, guardian of the process, mediator, etc.
- Kraft paper, string or yarn, voting cards
- Practical scenarios (e.g. disagreement over a piece of work, person wants to leave the group...)

Step by step

1. Collective exploration (30 min)

What does "community decision-making" mean to you?
Have you ever felt that you own something without having the keys?

Key phrases are collected and a conceptual cloud is drawn.

2. Governance workshop (45 min)

In small groups:

- They are assigned (or choose) a governance model.
- They face three simulated decisions:
    - Quota increase

        - Conflict between two people
        - Change in the design of the common space
- Each group solves the cases according to their model and presents:
    - How did they decide?
    - Who decided?
    - Who did not participate?

3. Evaluation panel (30 min)

The models are compared according to:

- Efficiency
- Inclusion
- Clarity
- Care for the links
- Equity

A conversation is initiated to identify which parts can inspire the group model.

4. Symbolic construction of ownership (30 min)

The proposal is to create a physical installation with materials (rope, wood, earth, water...) that represents what **collective ownership** means to the group.
Each person contributes a symbol, an object or a word that connects them to the common space.

5. Closing (15 min)

Round with the question:

What do I need to feel part of this project, without having to own it?

Powerful questions:

- What kind of decisions do I want to make... and which ones do I prefer to delegate?
- How can we decide without exhausting ourselves?
- How do we know if a decision is fair if we don't all think alike?
- What does it mean to care for a project without owning it?
- What structure makes me feel free but also responsible?

Topic: Entry and exit of members

The entrance door, the exit door... and the culture that crosses them.

In a cohousing cooperative, members are not passive users: they are co-owners of the project (though not of the housing), they have decision-making power, responsibilities and lasting bonds.

Therefore, input and output processes must be well defined, agreed and reviewable, as they have an impact:

- On group cohesion
- On economic sustainability
- In governance
- On the legal certainty of the whole

A good input/output system is not rigid, but clear, fair and documented. It helps to maintain a balance between openness and project identity.



Conceptual framework: keys to regulating inputs and outputs

🟢 New members joining

Aspects to be defined:

- What criteria must a person meet in order to enter?
    - Previous participation in training courses
    - Affinity with the values of the project
    - Economic capacity
    - Minimum contribution to share capital
- Who decides on their incorporation?
    - Assembly, welcoming committee, shared evaluation
- What phases are there?
    - Application → Period of affiliation → Confirmation of membership

🔴 Departure of members

Key aspects:

- How is the resignation formalised?
- What about your financial contribution?
- Is there a waiting list or replacement system?
- What legal or economic liabilities are temporarily maintained?

Rules of procedure as an essential tool

- All this should be reflected in a set **of rules of procedure**, approved by the assembly and subject to revision.
- This regulation should include:
    - Types of members
    - Entry criteria and procedures
    - Exit mechanisms (voluntary or forced)
    - Return of Contributions System
    - Accompaniment and handover process

It is not just a legal tool: it is a way to **put down in writing how we want to take care of ourselves, organise ourselves and grow justly.**

Important considerations:

- Members have a **voice, a vote and responsibility**. Not all participants have to be members, but **decisions are taken at the assembly**.
- **Exiting the project should not be a trauma**. If it is well regulated, it can even be a learning opportunity.
- The entrance should balance **openness and identity of the project**: not everyone has to enter, but it should not become a "closed club" either.

Dynamics: "The doors of the group: how do we get in and out?

Estimated duration: 2h

Participants: 10-30 persons

Objective: to identify the key criteria and processes for the entry and exit of people in the project, and to collectively elaborate a first draft of principles for the internal rules of procedure.

Materials:

- Long roll of paper (to draw a route: entrance → path → exit)
- Cards with real situations (a person leaves, a new family enters, etc.).
- Criteria and values cards
- Ropes, symbolic objects, post-its

Step by step

1. Visualisation of the route (20 min)

The "path of a partner" is drawn on the floor or on a blackboard:

Input → Participation → Transformation → Output (voluntary or not)

Each person places where they think they are now and why.

2. Focus groups: the entry (30 min)

Groups are created to design a desired input protocol:

- What are the steps?
- What values should be respected?
- What kind of accompaniment is needed?

They are shared and collected in a common panel.

3. Focus groups: the exit (30 min)

New groups are now working on the exit:

- How does it communicate?
- What about the money?
- How is care and memory preserved?
- What remains in writing?

Again, the proposals for the regulation are collected.

4. Case studies and collective responses (20 min)

Real or fictitious situations are presented:

- One person wants to leave urgently
- There is disagreement about incorporating a family
- Death of a member of the group with no clear heirs
- There is one person who refuses to participate

The group responds collectively: what would we do?

5. Synthesis and closing (20 min)

Each person writes a sentence beginning with:

> *"In order to feel good about the inputs and outputs of the project, I need to..."*

Everything is collected in an initial document for the future rules of procedure.

Powerful questions:

- What do I need to trust who enters the project?
- How can I say goodbye to this space if I decide to leave?
- What mechanisms do we need to take care of those who arrive... and those who leave?
- How do we protect ourselves legally without losing our community soul?

Ecosystem

- What does our cohousing bring to the neighbourhood and what can we receive?
- How to involve schools, businesses, associations and neighbours?
- What alliances can we activate with the Third Sector and the administration?
- How to make our social impact visible?
- What if cohousing was just the beginning of something bigger?

Topic: Connecting with the neighbourhood

Let cohousing not be a bubble ... but a seed

Cohousing does not exist in a vacuum. It is embedded in a territory, an urban fabric, a network of social relations, a shared memory. This is why **thinking of the neighbourhood as part of the project (and not as a backdrop)** is essential for cohousing to be truly transformative.

Connection to the neighbourhood is not only desirable, it is strategic:

- It enriches the project with diversity, roots and belonging.
- It generates key partnerships for social and cultural sustainability.
- It reinforces the social and political acceptance of the model.
- It extends the ecological, educational and relational impact beyond its physical boundaries.
- It offers real spaces for **interdependence and cooperation.**



Keys to a meaningful connection with the environment

Impact areas to be taken into account:

Dimension	What can cohousing bring to the neighbourhood?
Economic	Support for local businesses, generation of green jobs, solidarity-based micro-economies
Social	Spaces for participation, intergenerational integration, networking with other entities, etc.
Environmental	Community gardens, sustainable mobility, responsible and local consumption
Relational	Coexistence, security, mutual care, shared culture
Educational	Pedagogical projects with schools, workshops, opening up of spaces

Strategies for linking with the neighbourhood:

- Participatory diagnosis of the environment
- Collective maps of local resources and actors
- Partnerships with schools, health centres, businesses, associations, etc.
- Participation in existing community processes
- Opening of common spaces for neighbourhood activities
- Transparent and horizontal communication with the environment

Dynamics: "Mapping the neighbourhood to sow community".

Duration: 2h

Participants: cohousers + people from the surrounding area (if possible)

Objective: to get to know the environment better, to recognise possibilities of collaboration, to build a first strategy of connection with the neighbourhood.

Materials:

- Physical or symbolic map of the neighbourhood
- Resource sheets, emotions, conflicts, desires, wishes, etc.
- Ropes, post-its, icons for marking places
- Panel for ideas and commitments

Step by step

1. **Introduction: changing the focus (15 min**

   Cohousing is not a world apart: it is part of the world. Let's look outwards.

The 5 areas of impact are presented and we are invited to think collectively about the role of the project in the neighbourhood.

2. **Emotional map of the environment (30 min**

- Important, troubled, loved, neglected, neglected, potential places are placed on the map...
- Ideas are jotted down: what do we want to take care of? what are our concerns? with whom could we ally?

3. **Identification of key actors (30 min**

- Associations, schools, public services, neighbourhood networks, vegetable gardens, shops...
- How could we collaborate? What could we do together?

4. **Whirlwind of ideas and commitments (30 min**

- What first concrete action could we take to get closer to the neighbourhood?
- How do we open a communication channel with the community?

5. **Closing with a collective symbol (15 min)**
   Each person writes on a sheet of paper:

"This cohousing will be part of the neighbourhood if..."
And they are all hung together on a mural-panel.

Powerful questions to activate the connection with the neighbourhood:

- **For the internal group:**
  - What do we (really) know about the neighbourhood where we will be or are?
  - How can we move from being a "project" to being "part of the neighbourhood"?
  - What fears or resistances do we have about opening up to our environment?
  - What do we have to offer... and what do we need to learn?
- **To link up with the neighbourhood:**
  - What do you dream that this cohousing will bring to the neighbourhood?
  - What concerns do you have about a project like this in your environment?
  - What common spaces would you like to share or co-create?
  - What people, places or knowledge should we include from the outset?

Topic: Alliances and partnerships

A cohousing is not built alone... it is woven together with others.

No community project lives in isolation. Their sustainability, impact and potential for transformation depend largely on their ability to build meaningful partnerships with other organisations, collectives, networks or local actors.

Cohousing with good partnerships:

- Access to more resources (material, human, symbolic)
- Gain legitimacy and social support
- Avoid duplication of existing efforts in the territory.
- Multiply your capacity for learning and innovation
- It becomes a **reference, a node and a bridge** for other processes.



What do we mean by meaningful partnership?

- It is a relationship built on trust and purpose
- It is based on fair exchanges: knowledge, space, support, resources, care, etc.
- It has a clear, but not rigid, relationship structure.
- It generates a positive impact for both parties... and for the

Types of partnerships in cohousing

Type of actor	Examples	What can they contribute?	What do they need?
Social entities	NGOs, neighbourhood associations, foundations	Technical support, legitimacy, networks, experience of care or living together	Spaces for action, collaboration, visibility
Public administration	City Council, social services, town planning	Land, aid, legitimacy, political support	Solid projects, social return, real impact
Educational or cultural centres	Schools, libraries, civic centres	Joint activities, intergenerational connection	Spaces, collaboration, citizen participation
Local or social economy enterprises	Local trade, cooperatives, green businesses	Services, employment, circular economy, local sourcing	Conscious customers, stability, projection
Territorial or thematic networks	Housing platforms, friendly cooperatives, agro-ecological networks	Mutual support, learning, advocacy	Participation, collaboration, replicability

What makes a partnership work?

- Clear expectations from the outset
- Trust built over time
- Balanced and valued contributions
- Spaces for review and listening
- Shared purpose beyond ad hoc exchange

Dynamics: "Weaving networks, not just houses".

Estimated duration: 2h

Participants: cohousers + if possible allied individuals or collectives

Objective: to map existing and desired partnerships, identify strategic relationships and design a first roadmap for meaningful collaboration.

Materials:

- Large kraft paper in the shape of a spider's web
- Coloured threads or strings
- Cards with types of actors and relationships (Annex 12)
- Coloured stickers (for relationship level: weak, medium, strong)
- Cards to define inputs and needs

Step by step

1. Map of current relationships (30 min)

- At the heart of the paper: cohousing
- Around: all the entities, collectives, people, institutions with which there is a relationship with
- A thread is drawn to indicate the link: weak (thin), medium (normal), strong (thick).

2. Analysis of key partnerships (30 min)

In groups, choose a real or desired alliance and respond:

- What do we bring to the table?
- What's in it for us?
- What makes it strong or weak?
- How could it grow or improve?

3. Whirlwind of dream alliances (30 min)

- Who would we like to collaborate with but have not yet done so?
- What partnerships can expand the impact of the project?
- What first actions could we take to move closer?

4. Roadmap design (20 min)

- Choose 3 priority partnerships (one social, one economic, one institutional).
- Define the first step to initiate or strengthen it.
- Assign symbolic responsibilities and deadlines

5. Inspiring closure (10 min)

Which alliance inspires me, which one scares me a little, which one do I want to sit down and dream about, and with whom do I want to sit down and dream?

Powerful questions for designing and strengthening partnerships:

- With whom do we share vision, values or territory... but not yet collaborate?
- What could we offer that would be of value to other groups or organisations?
- What kind of collaboration do we need now... and what kind later?
- What current partnerships do we need to nurture or review?
- How to distinguish between a genuine alliance and an "instrumental" alliance?

Topic: Integration and belonging

It's not enough to have a place to live... we need to feel that this place also inhabits us.

It is often assumed that once a person joins a cohousing, he or she automatically feels part of it. But this does not happen by decree: integration and a sense of belonging are processes that must be nurtured, cultivated and continually reviewed.

A project that does not work on integration:

- It leaves some people on the emotional periphery of the group.
- It fosters invisible inequalities or latent tensions.
- Generates unnecessary turnover or unwanted departures.
- It weakens mutual trust and collective motivation.

On the contrary, a cohesive group, which cultivates shared identity without erasing diversity, is more likely to resist, adapt, take care of itself and endure.



Keys for working on integration and belonging

Differentiating between structural and emotional

- Integration: feeling part of the group dynamics, knowing how to participate, understanding the rules, being informed, having a defined place.
- Belonging: feeling that I am part of something bigger, that my emotions count, that I am accepted as I am, that this is also mine.

Some practical keys:

- Have a clear and careful welcoming process.
- Facilitating real participation: in decisions, tasks, spaces, links.
- Cultivate an open collective identity, which does not impose a single way of being.
- Taking care of shared rituals: celebrations, welcomes, care, closures.
- Establish mechanisms for continuous listening and horizontal participation.
- Making visible what unites us, without denying the nuances.

How to work on this in teams and groups?

- Establishing safe spaces for expression
- Regularly asking: *How do you feel in the group*
- Promoting participation in a roles and tasks
- Visibilising the talents of each person
- Opening difficult conversations from care
- Accompanying the key moments of each cycle (entry, conflict, mourning, celebration).

Dynamics: "Feeling part of it: map of belonging".

Estimated duration: 2h

Participants: 10-30 persons

Objective: to identify how integration and belonging are experienced in the group, to detect risks of exclusion and to generate agreements and actions that reinforce the "we".

Materials:

- Large paper or cardboard in the shape of a mandala / net / tree
- Coloured cards (emotions, actions, roles, symbols)
- Stickers, string, markers
- Sticky notes with questions

Step by step

1. Emotional activation (15 min)

> *Think of a group where you felt totally part of it. What made it possible?*
> Key words are shared and collected on a mural.

2. Integration map (30 min)

In small groups, the "integration journey" of a person in cohousing is drawn:

- First contact
- Initial participation
- Decision-making
- Full confidence
- Feeling part of history

Obstacles, critical moments, support points are identified.

3. Symbolic belonging network (30 min)

Each person receives a thread and ties it to a central point (the project). Then he or she connects it to other people with whom he or she feels a strong bond. The result is observed: who is on the periphery, what connections are missing?

4. Proposal circle (30 min)

> What can we do to make everyone feel part of the project on a daily basis?

A mural is constructed with concrete actions:

- Creating welcoming rituals
- Accompanying personal processes

- Rotate invisible tasks
- Listening to the quietest voices
- Remembering what already unites us

5. Closing with a shared phrase (15 min)

Each person responds:

> *This group will be more mine when...*

They are read aloud, collected to inspire a group action plan.

Powerful questions to work on integration and belonging:

- When did I first feel that this group was also mine?
- What do I need to feel inside while still being myself?
- Who are we inadvertently leaving out?
- How would we know if someone is feeling isolated?
- What are the things that unite us beyond the housing project?

Topic: Community building

Beyond the building, beyond the group ... we sow a possible world

Community building is not a one-off objective or a phase of the project. It is a continuous and evolutionary process, where the group transforms itself as it transforms its environment. It involves moving from the logic of "making a place to live" to "weaving a community that cares for life".

Working on this topic allows:

- Looking at the project from a generational and perspective
- Building a "we" that is not exhausted in the present or in the people who drive it.
- Taking care of relational processes as part of the cohousing infrastructure
- Sowing community culture beyond the physical space



Conceptual framework: community as process and as legacy

What is community building?

It is the set of actions, relationships, structures, agreements, rituals, learning and links that allow a group to recognise itself as **a living community**, capable of sustaining, adapting and transforming itself.

It is the "invisible architecture" that supports everything else:

- Care of links
- Culture of dialogue
- Processes of memory and meaning
- Ability to manage conflict
- Openness to the environment and new generations

Approaches to deepen this vision:

Deep Ecology (Arne Naess, Joanna Macy)

It posits that we are an inseparable part of the web of life. Community is not limited to the human group: it includes territory, species, water, history.

It involves:

- Expanded sense of belonging
- Care of the site as part of the group
- Interdependence between generations and species

Deep Democracy (Arnold Mindell)

It affirms that all points of view (even the marginal, invisible or emotional) must have space. What is silenced... is embodied.

It involves:

- Listening to those who do not speak
- Embedding conflict as part of collective wisdom
- Opening up to the unseen: dreams, emotions, intuitions, collective wounds

Keys to a vibrant and resilient community

- Creating spaces for memory and storytelling
- Taking care of the group's rituals, symbols and celebrations
- Accompanying transitions (arrivals, departures, duels, changes)
- Fostering a culture of listening
- Taking on legacy as part of the project: what do we leave for later?
- Sustaining a culture of mutual care, not just efficiency

Dynamics: "The Invisible Legacy

Duration: 2h - 2h 30min

Participants: 10-30 persons

Objective: to become aware of the deep community dimension of the project, to imagine its legacy and to activate mechanisms to take care of what is not always visible, but sustains everything.

Materials:

- Large circle with symbols (stones, branches, fabrics, photos, earth...)
- Large paper and natural elements
- Posters for future messages
- Space for silence / pause / introspection

Step by step

1. Invitation to look with different eyes (15 min)

> *We will look at our project not as something we own... but as something we serve, care for and offer to the world.*

A space of silence opens up, an invitation to connect with the body, with the place, with the future.

2. Legacy Map (30 min)

A tree is drawn:

- Roots: what brought us here?
- Log: what are we holding today?
- Branches and leaves: what do we want to flower?
- Fruits: what do we want to leave for those who come after us?

Contributions are written on cards and placed on the mural.

3. The voice of the territory (30 min)

Each group symbolically represents an actor in the ecosystem:

- The neighbourhood
- Land
- Future generations
- Forgotten emotions
- People who could not stay

From that voice, they say what they need from the group. There is open listening, without debate.

4. Commitments to invisible care (30 min)

Each person writes:

> *What part of the community do I want to take care of even if no one asks me to?*

They are deposited in a "book of silent promises" as part of the project's living archive.

5. Closing with memory and projection (15 min)

One person is chosen to read aloud a text that speaks of legacy, ecology, deep community (it can be poetic or symbolic).
A circle is made with hands and a word is offered to the centre.

Powerful questions: to facilitate this space

- What world are we creating by inhabiting this project?
- What part of this cohousing do I want to keep alive when I am gone?
- What "extended community" do we belong to, beyond the people who live here?
- What story do we want them to tell about us 30 years from now?
- What things can't be seen... but if we don't take care of them, they fall down?

Discoveries and learning

Housing as a right

"Having a house is not the same as having a home. And having a home should not depend on having money".

For years, we have believed that housing was a commodity, a good, an investment. But on this journey, we have rediscovered something much deeper: housing is a condition for life.

A decent, stable, accessible and shared home not only improves health or family finances: it transforms the way people relate, work, care and dream.

Covivienda projects are not born out of privilege, but out of the conviction that the right to housing is collective. What we do is not construct buildings: we weave communities that protect and sustain life.
And that is not achieved with square metres... it is achieved with shared vision, solid alliances and long-term commitment.

To those who promote public policies, design cities, accompany vulnerable people, or seek real solutions: to be part of a co-housing project is to defend the right to have a home that is good for us.

The power of diversity

"The easy thing is to get together with those who think the same way. What is transformative is learning to build with those who think differently".

Each person who joins a cohousing brings with them a story, a way of being in the world, an emotional map and a particular way of dreaming. And far from being a problem, this is the treasure of the group.

We have learned that diversity is not managed, it is celebrated. When different generations, cultures, economic realities or abilities live together with respect, a richer, wiser and more humane community emerges.

But this does not happen alone: it needs inclusive structures, deep listening, conscious governance and spaces where differences are not silenced but become a source of creativity and care.

To those who work for inclusion, innovation or social justice: to support a co-housing project is to open the door to a coexistence that is not afraid of difference, but turns it into a collective force.

Governance and ownership

"We don't own the project. We are temporary guardians of something that is beyond us".

When we started, many people asked: *Who is the owner?* And we soon discovered that this was not the question. The question was:
How do we take care of what belongs to all, so that it does not become the power of a few?

Collective ownership has forced us to think differently. It is not just about legal roles, but about how we relate to space and to each other.
And shared governance is not synonymous with eternal assemblies, but with living agreements, with structures that share power, responsibilities and care.

There is no single formula: we have explored sociocracy, deep democracy, spiral governance... The important thing is not the model, but that the community feels that what it builds belongs to it, cares for it... and challenges it.

To those who design legal frameworks, finance or manage: betting on projects with collective ownership and participatory governance is investing in autonomy, co-responsibility and citizen resilience.

Experiment and adapt

"Nothing goes as planned. Luckily."

Building community is not about following a master plan. It is about being open to change, making mistakes with tenderness, learning from conflict and celebrating deviations.

The most important thing is not to have all the answers, but to design systems that allow us to test, revise and adapt without breaking.

Cohousing has taught us to let go of the obsession for perfection. To trust more in processes than in products. To listen to what is not said.
And above all, to understand that the value of a project is not in what it solves, but in what it allows us to experiment for possible futures.

To those who work in social, urban or ecological innovation: supporting co-housing projects is to accompany living laboratories of systemic change, where the capacity to respond, care and adapt to the times to come is cultivated.

A guide for today... and for what's ahead

"When we dream alone, it is only a dream. When we dream together, it is the beginning of a new reality."
- African proverb

This handbook is not just a document. It is the shared harvest of a journey made by many different people, organisations, territories, approaches and knowledge. It is born out of the deep desire that housing ceases to be a commodity or a privilege, and becomes once again a right, a refuge and a space for community life.

Throughout its pages we have addressed the pillars that support a cohousing project:

🌱 Collective drive and shared purpose.
🏗️ Architecture that listens and adapts.
💶 The economy as a tool for justice and sustainability.
⚖️ The legal framework as a container for agreements and commitments.
🌍 The link with the territory as a key to impact and permanence.

And we have done so not from theory, but from the living practice of the Cohousilience project, with its challenges, learnings, open questions and concrete strategies.

This handbook covers:

- Dynamics to facilitate various processes
- Keys to making difficult decisions without breaking ties
- Questions for imagining new ways of living
- Real experiences that show that another model is possible and is already .

But above all, this handbook is a tool to activate...

- To people who dream of living in
- To groups who want to promote their
- To social entities that seek to sustain processes
- To administrations that want to make public policies with a impact
- Ethical banks, cooperatives, architects, facilitators

- To any person or group that does not want to resign themselves to a housing model that excludes, makes precarious and isolates.

Cohousilience: sowing community for what's ahead

From the European project **Cohousilience**, we have promoted a space for cooperation and mutual learning between experiences from Italy, France, Belgium and Spain.
We have met inspiring practices, courageous projects and communities that show that it can be done:
✅ Combining sustainability, inclusion and collective design.
✅ Opening up to the neighbourhood and the territory
✅ Caring for links as much as for walls
✅ Designing with time, not against it

This handbook is part of that legacy. But the most important thing **starts now**: when you, the reader, **decide to do something with it**.

Because if we have learned anything, it is this:

Transformation is not inherited. It is practised, rehearsed, shared.

🙌 **Thank you for being part of this journey.**

Annex I. Cards for "The map of spaces".

🧩 Two people have a very different opinion on how to organise a common area.

🕯️ One person in the group is going through a bereavement and needs emotional support.

🧱 We are in the process of defining the design of the exterior spaces of the project.

🌿 We want to do a review of how we have felt living together over the last year.

📣 One person wants to propose a new use for the shared lounge.

🧘 There is accumulated tension in the group due to undistributed tasks.

💭 We want to dream together what our cohousing will be like in 10 years' time.

🎯 A decision has to be taken on how to finance the project.

🔄 The aim is to evaluate how the collective cleaning shifts have worked.

🎉 We want to organise a welcome party for new people.

👶 There are plans to create a space for children.

👣 A person feels disconnected from the group and does not know how to participate anymore.

🧶 We are developing our principles and values as a community.

📊 It is time to review whether the current decision-making process is working for us.

🗺️ We want to plan how to organise ourselves for the next 6 months.

🔥 There has been a conflict between two people and we need to address it as a group.

🌈 We dream of how the neighbourhood can be integrated into our project.

🎨 We want to create a collective mural that represents us.

📅 Weekly tasks need to be organised.

💌 We want to give feedback on how we have felt in the last assemblies.

Annex 2. "The elements that move us

🌍 EARTH - the structure, the concrete, the constancy

I feel comfortable when there is order, clear routines and defined responsibilities.
I tend to think about how to land ideas before I get excited about them.
I am involved in the practical details and step-by-step execution.
It bothers me when too much improvisation takes place or agreements are not honoured.
I like to make sure things are done right, even if it takes longer.

💧 WATER - caring, sensitivity, listening

I easily detect people's emotions even if they do not express them.
I care that all voices feel heard and recognised.
Sometimes I find it difficult to sustain open conflicts because I need harmony.
I look out for the emotional well-being of the group, even if I don't always say so.
I like to accompany processes and people from the subtle and the invisible.

🌬️ AIRE - the ideas, the vision, the planning

I get excited about imagining possibilities and envisioning possible futures.
I like to come up with new ideas and see connections between different things.
Sometimes I have so many ideas that I find it hard to focus or land them.
I enjoy the reflection or design phase more than the practical implementation.
It motivates me to think about the long-term impact of what we do today.

🔥 FIRE - the action, the energy, the momentum

I like to initiate things and encourage the group to move.
I have a flair for motivation and enthusiasm.
Sometimes I act without much thought because I am driven by urgency.
I get frustrated when I feel that the group is not moving forward or is blocked.
I enjoy making quick decisions and experimenting on the fly.

Annex 3: "Our decision map

1. Strategic Decisions

They set the overall direction of the project and its long-term purpose.

1. Define the core values of cohousing.
2. Choose the legal model (cooperative, association, etc.).
3. Establish the form of transfer of use or ownership.
4. Define criteria for entry and exit from the group.
5. Decide on the number of housing units in the project.
6. Choose the final location of the land or property.
7. Establish the level of openness of the cohousing to the neighbourhood.
8. Create a formal partnership with an external entity (NGO, administration).
9. Decide whether to work with a participatory architecture.
10. Determine the governance approach (sociocratic, assembly, etc.).

2. Technical and Operational Decisions

They have to do with the concrete implementation of the project, both physically and in day-to-day management.

1. Choose the main construction materials.
2. Determine the location of common spaces.
3. Contract the construction company.
4. Select the company or person for the site management.
5. Choose the type of heating or energy system.
6. Decide how the cleaning of common spaces will be managed.
7. Assign logistical tasks for group events.
8. Buy furniture for a shared room.
9. Approve a schedule of meetings and shifts.
10. Implement an app or internal communication tool.

3. Relational or Care Decisions

They affect people's ties, emotional climate and well-being.

1. How to accompany a person going through a personal crisis.

2. How to manage a conflict situation between two people.
3. Decide whether to trigger external mediation.
4. Review how invisible care is distributed in the group.
5. Agree on spaces or moments for active listening.
6. Whether or not to include minors in certain group decisions.
7. Propose a ritual space for farewells or closures.
8. How to support the integration of new people.
9. Rethink roles when there is overload or fatigue.
10. Incorporate moments of celebration or recognition.

4. Assessment and Learning Decisions

They allow to review, adjust and improve what is done collectively.

1. Assess whether the decision-making system is working.
2. Review the economic model after the first year of coexistence.
3. Take stock of the actual use of common spaces.
4. Analyse how the accompaniment of new people has been.
5. Check whether commissions are working well.
6. Assess the level of participation in meetings.
7. Review the overall satisfaction level of the group.
8. Assess the degree of connection with the neighbourhood.
9. Reflect on the environmental impact of the project.
10. Assessing the balance between doing and caring.

Annex 4: "From Conflict to Learning

20 Jackal phrases

(reactive, moralising or judgemental phrases, used as triggers)

1. You always do the same thing!
2. Nobody cares about what I need.
3. This is a waste of time.
4. You don't know how to listen.
5. You are exaggerating.
6. You should have noticed.
7. I am not interested in your opinion.
8. Why don't you get things right for once?
9. That is nonsense.
10. You always think of yourself.
11. I knew this was going to happen.
12. You have no right to complain.
13. If you don't agree, you can leave.
14. That's your problem, not mine.
15. How childish you are.
16. You are never available when you are needed.
17. That's just the way you are.
18. Here we go again.
19. You do it to annoy.
20. I don't value anything you do.

20 Giraffe Phrases

(empathetic sentences, connected to needs, from caring)

1. I feel frustrated when this happens because I need clarity.
2. I would like to understand your point of view better.
3. I need a moment to breathe before I speak further.
4. Could you tell me how you feel about this?

5. I care about our relationship and I want to find a solution together.
6. I am afraid that we are not listening to each other.
7. I feel hurt because I value mutual respect so much.
8. When this happens, I need more collaboration.
9. I would like to find a way for both sides to be on the same page.
10. Can you help me understand what you need?
11. I would like us to reach an agreement that makes sense for all of us.
12. I am feeling confused and would benefit from more clarity.
13. I value your presence in the group and want to find a way to take care of it.
14. I would like to talk to you again when we are calmer.
15. I feel tension and would like to transform this moment into something constructive.
16. Can you tell me if you are willing to listen to me for a moment longer?
17. I need to trust that we can work this out together.
18. I am hurt by what happened and I would like to share what I need.
19. I would like to repair the link and learn from this.
20. Can we stop for a moment and see what we really need?

Emotional dictionary (50 emotions grouped according to CNV)

Emotions when needs are met:

Joy:

- Enthusiasm
- Gozo
- Gratitude
- Content
- Satisfaction

Calm:

- Serenity
- Peace
- Relaxation
- Plenitude
- Balance

Trust:

- Security
- Hope
- Commitment
- Appreciation
- Stability

Connection:

- Empathy
- Love
- Privacy
- Care
- Inspiration

Energy:

- Vitality
- Motivation
- Curiosity
- Creativity
- Fluency

Emotions when needs are NOT met:

Sadness:

- Disappointment
- Duel
- Soledad
- Frustration

- Discouragement

Fear:

- Anxiety
- Insecurity
- Concern
- Panic
- Doubt

Anger:

- Anger
- Outrage
- Impotence
- Irritation
- Rabia

Shame:

- Discomfort
- Blame
- Devaluation
- Repentance
- Confusion

Disconnection:

- Boredom
- Overwhelm
- Fatigue
- Disorientation
- Saturation

List of 50 requirements grouped according to the CNV

Connection:

- Affection
- Listen to

- Empathy
- Privacy
- Support
- Sense of belonging
- Share
- Acceptance
- Understanding
- Acknowledgement

Personal well-being:

- Peace of mind
- Movement
- Game
- Rest
- Care
- Health
- Beauty
- Contact with nature
- Rhythm
- Nutrition

Autonomy and freedom:

- Own space
- Authentic expression
- Personal time
- Election
- Creativity
- Independence
- Clarity
- Introspection
- Respect

- Coherence

Meaning and purpose:

- Contribution
- Purpose
- Growth
- Inspiration
- Sentido
- Learning
- Challenge
- Transcendence
- Co-creation
- Developments

Community and collaboration:

- Participation
- Cooperation
- Justice
- Equality
- Transparency
- Agreement
- Trust
- Security
- Equity
- Shared responsibility

Annex 5: "Listening to each other beyond the obvious".

Guiding questions for the dynamics:

1. What do you value most in your way of living in community?
2. What causes you tension or difficulty in living together?
3. What would you like to transform in your environment or in the project?

Listening levels and examples of conversation

1. Listening 1: Downloading (listening from judgement and what is already known)

→ There is no real curiosity. We repeat what we think, without openness.

Question 1

- "We know what's there, it's not going to change."
- "I've always thought like that, I don't need any more."
- "That's to be expected, isn't it?"
- "The important thing is to do what you have to do".
- "As always: let things work out".

Question 2

- "People don't cooperate, full stop.
- "This has always been a mess."
- "I don't understand why we complicate everything."
- "It's always the same with this person.
- "What is annoying is obvious, there is no need to talk about it".

Question 3

- "I don't think we can transform anything, honestly."
- "If people don't change, nothing changes."
- "This has already been defined.
- "What's the point?"
- "This has been tried before.

2. Listening 2: Factual (open-minded listening)

→ I allow myself to receive new information, even if it does not coincide with what I thought.

Question 1

- "I really value having shared spaces".
- "I realise that I like it when it's quiet".
- "I hadn't thought about how important it is to feel safe."
- "I appreciate it when there is clarity in the agreements".

- "I discovered that I need time for myself, even in community."

Question 2

- "I find that I find it hard to speak when there is tension."
- "Sometimes it stresses me out not knowing who does what".
- "It bothers me when things are assumed without asking."
- "What stresses me the most is not feeling taken into account".
- "I find it difficult to accept other people's different rhythms".

Question 3

- "I think we could redesign how we use common spaces."
- "It would be good to open up more to the neighbourhood."
- "We could change the way we make decisions."
- "I think we need to rethink task shifts."
- "I wonder if we could do more things outdoors."

3. Listening 3: Empathic (listening from the heart)

→ I listen to what is behind: emotions, needs, meaning. I am present.

Question 1

- "I value feeling part of it and knowing that I can be myself".
- "I care a lot about how we take care of ourselves."
- "For me it is important that there is daily joy".
- "I like to know that if I need something, someone will be there".
- "I am grateful for the commitment of all the people".

Question 2

- "It hurts me when I feel that they don't trust me".
- "What affects me the most is not feeling listened to".
- "Sometimes I feel alone in my worries".
- "I get frustrated that I can't find the time to express myself."
- "It makes me sad when I feel that we disconnect."

Question 3

- "I would like to transform fear into curiosity."

- "I would like this place to inspire other people".
- "I dream of a more open and trusting community."
- "I want us to build something that leaves a mark.
- "I hope that our differences will make us stronger".

4. Listening 4: Generative (listening from the emerging future)

→ I listen from the field of possibilities. What is not yet, but could be. Deep and transformative listening.

Question 1

- "I envision a community that cares as much as it inspires."
- "I value not only what we live now, but also what we can become.
- "I feel that we are sowing another way of inhabiting the world.
- "Perhaps the most valuable thing is the kind of world we are creating here."
- "I'm excited to think that what we do will resonate beyond us."

Question 2

- "The tensions we are experiencing could be gateways to growth".
- "Conflict is an opportunity to discover something new about ourselves".
- "I realise that every difficulty is part of the collective process".
- "We can use discomfort as a compass to transform ourselves".
- "If we listen well, this thing that hurts can bring us a gift".

Question 3

- "What if our cohousing was a beacon for other ways of living?
- "I envision a future where we are radical care leaders".
- "We can be the seeds of something much bigger".
- "What if we build a community that not only inhabits, but transforms?"
- "Perhaps what we dream of today will be home to many people tomorrow.

Annex 6: "Mapping the comfort we dream of".

20 Technical solutions or passive/green strategies

1. South-facing windows (in the northern hemisphere)
   → Take advantage of natural solar gain in winter, reducing the need for heating.
2. Mobile solar protection (blinds, louvres, louvres).
   → Control excess heat in summer without blocking natural light.
3. Natural cross ventilation
   → Allows air renewal and passive cooling by generating airflow between opposing facades.
4. Green roof (green roof)
   → Improves thermal insulation, reduces the heat island effect and retains rainwater.
5. Shading with deciduous vegetation
   → Trees or climbers that provide shade in summer and allow sunlight to pass through in winter.
6. Thermal inertia with thick walls
   → Materials such as stone or adobe store heat and release it slowly, stabilising temperatures.
7. Natural thermal insulation (sheep's wool, cork, cellulose).
   → Reduces energy losses without negative environmental impact.
8. Skylights or solar tubes
   → They bring natural light into deep indoor areas without the need for electricity.
9. Making the most of interior courtyards
   → They favour lighting, cross ventilation and interior microclimates.
10. Solar thermal collectors
    → They heat domestic water using solar energy, even in cold climates.
11. Ventilation grilles under the roof (solar chimney)
    → To allow naturally accumulated warm air to escape.
12. Use of light colours on the façade
    → Reflect solar radiation, reducing heating in summer.
13. Low carbon footprint materials
    → Such as raw earth, local wood, straw or reed reduce environmental impact.

14. Low enthalpy geothermal energy
    → *Harnesses the constant temperature of the subsurface for efficient heating or cooling.*
15. Rainwater harvesting systems
    → *Reuse water for irrigation, cisterns or washing machines, and reduce runoff.*
16. Integrated photovoltaic panels
    → *Self-production of energy without taking up additional space.*
17. Thermal transition zones (porches, verandas).
    → *They help to regulate temperature changes between indoors and outdoors.*
18. Orientation and compact shape of the building
    → *Reduces thermal losses and improves energy performance.*
19. Healthy interior finishes (natural, non-toxic paints).
    → *Improve air quality and the well-being of those who live there.*
20. Use of natural acoustically absorbent materials
    → *Improve acoustic comfort without generating chemical contamination.*

20 Conventional technical solutions

1. Split air conditioning
   → *Requires electricity and produces indirect emissions.*
2. Electric or oil radiators
   → *High energy demand, not very efficient in poor insulation.*
3. Aluminium double glazing without thermal break.
   → *Improved insulation, but with unsustainable materials.*
4. Polyurethane sandwich panels
   → *They insulate well, but are petroleum-based and not very recyclable.*
5. Sheet metal roofs
   → *Cheap and easy to install, but transmits heat and noise.*
6. Electric underfloor heating
   → *Efficient in comfort, but high consumption and cost.*
7. LED lamps on all day due to lack of natural light.
   → *Lower consumption, but consequence of poor lighting design.*
8. Automatic electric awnings
   → *Practical but energy-consuming and maintenance-intensive.*

9. Standard PVC joinery
   → *Good thermal insulation, but not very environmentally friendly.*
10. Vinyl floorings or synthetic laminates
   → *Apparently functional, but not very breathable and polluting.*
11. Centralised home automation systems
   → *Provide control, but depend on energy consumption and technical maintenance.*
12. Conventional reinforced concrete throughout the structure.
   → *Robust and economical, but very polluting in manufacture.*
13. Intensive use of laminated plasterboard (plasterboard)
   → *Versatile, but not very durable and with low thermal inertia.*
14. Continuous mechanical extraction system (VMC)
   → *Works well in efficiency, but relies on constant electricity.*
15. Opaque PVC roller blinds
   → *Effective for darkening, but can be damaged and cannot be recycled.*
16. Conventional acrylic paints
   → *Easy to apply, but with volatile organic compounds (VOC).*
17. Ceramic tiled floors throughout the house
   → *Thermally cold if there is no efficient heating.*
18. Use of carpets and rugs
   → *They can improve acoustics, but they are dusty and difficult to maintain.*
19. Centralised gas boiler
   → *Traditional solution, but relies on fossil fuels.*
20. Mirrored reflective glazing
   → *Reduces solar gain but cuts the visual connection to the outside.*

Annex 7: "Can we sustain this dream?"

SHEET 1: Approximate Monthly Household Income

What is the current household income?
You can use ranges if you prefer, it is not necessary to be exact.

- ☐ Less than €1,000/month
- ☐ Between 1.000 € and 1.500 €.
- ☐ Between 1.500 € and 2.000 €.
- ☐ Between 2.000 € and 2.500 €.
- ☐ More than €2,500

Is the income stable over time?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Depends on the employment situation

Observations or nuances you would like to share:
.....

SHEET 2: Possible contributions to the project

What initial financial contribution would you be willing to make if necessary?

- ☐ Less than €1,000
- ☐ Between 1.000 € and 3.000 €.
- ☐ Between 3.000 € and 6.000 €.
- ☐ More than €6,000

What monthly payment could you afford without putting the household's finances at risk?

- ☐ Less than €300
- ☐ 300 € - 500 €
- ☐ 500 € - 700 €
- ☐ More than €700

Can you imagine other ways to contribute to the project (time, skills, etc.)?
.....

FACT SHEET 3: Fears that accompany me

What scares or worries you about this project or your participation in it?
(Choose or add your own)

- ☐ Unable to meet medium-term costs
- ☐ That the group does not function well
- ☐ Change my personal/employment situation
- ☐ Unmanaged conflicts
- ☐ Not feeling listened to
- ☐ Otro: _____

How do you think you could address these fears with support from the group?
.....

SHEET 4: Specific questions

What questions or doubts do you have right now that you would like to resolve before committing yourself further?
(Example: about funding, legal forms, cohabitation, responsibilities...)

1. .....
2. .....
3. .....

Who or what would help you solve them?

- ☐ Other person in the group
- ☐ An external expert
- ☐ Documentation or examples from other projects
- ☐ A specific meeting on this issue

SHEET 5: What I am looking forward to

What makes you want to continue in this process, despite fears or doubts?
Write a sentence that captures this deep motivation.

.....

How can we collectively help each other to sustain that dream?

.....

Annex 8: "Is what we are building worth it?"

SHEET 1 - Scenario: Traditional renting in a medium-sized city

- Type of house: Flat 65 m², 2 rooms
- Monthly cost: 750 € + supplies (~100 €)
- Initial investment: 1.500 € (deposit + current month + agency)
- Duration of contract: 1 year renewable
- Ownership: external (no equity is generated)
- Advantages: low initial investment, flexibility
- Disadvantages: instability, unpredictable rises, no future value

What does a household gain or lose from this scenario in 10 years?

SHEET 2 - Scenario: Conventional mortgage in peripheral areas

- Type of house: Flat 80 m², 3 rooms
- Monthly cost: 550 € (25-year mortgage)
- Initial investment: €25,000 (down payment + purchase costs)
- Duration of the commitment: 25 years
- Ownership: individual with option to inherit or sell
- Advantages: security, wealth generation
- Disadvantages: high entry, financial risk, individual liability

What kind of people or moments in life fit best here?

SHEET 3 - Scenario: Cohousing - Co-operative transfer of use

- Type of accommodation: 70 m² + common areas
- Monthly cost: 450 € (assignment fee + maintenance)
- Initial investment: 5.000 - 10.000 € (share capital contribution)
- Duration of the commitment: Indefinite, no individual ownership
- Ownership: collective, no speculation
- Advantages: mutual support, security without market

- Disadvantages: less flexibility on exit, co-responsibility

How does the concept of "value" change in this model?

SHEET 4 - Scenario: Socially subsidised renting

- Type of house: 60 m², 2 rooms
- Monthly cost: 300 - 400 € (depending on income)
- Initial investment: low or zero
- Duration of contract: limited by social criteria
- Ownership: public or foundation
- Advantages: accessibility for low incomes
- Disadvantages: lack of continuity, little involvement in decisions

What elements make this model a temporary or structural solution?

SHEET 5 - Scenario: Participatory self-promotion

- Type of house: 80 m², bespoke design
- Estimated monthly cost: 500 - 600 € (fee to recoup investment)
- Estimated initial investment: 15.000 - 30.000 € (depending on contributions and funding)
- Duration of commitment: medium to long term
- Ownership: shared or cooperative
- Advantages: customised design, co-responsibility
- Disadvantages: more time and energy involved, increased complexity

How important is it to build something of your own, even if it costs more at the beginning?

Annex 9: "What legal form are we... or do we want to be?"

Sheet 1: Non-Profit Association (ASBL / Association)

What it is: Legal form based on the participation of natural or legal persons for a common, non-profit purpose.

Advantages:

- Easy and inexpensive to set up.
- Good option to start collective processes.
- It allows for the receipt of public subsidies.

Challenges:

- It does not allow profits to be distributed among partners.
- It requires clear accountability.
- It cannot assume ownership of private dwellings.

Uses: Organisation of community activities, management of common spaces, incubation of cohousing projects.

Sheet 2: Housing cooperative

What it is: Social economy entity in which the members are collective owners of the property. It can be for use (transfer) or ownership (sale).

Advantages:

- It allows access to housing at lower prices.
- It encourages democratic participation.
- Stable and replicable model.

Challenges:

- It requires long-term commitment.
- Complex administrative management.
- Need start-up capital or access to ethical finance.

Typical uses: Intergenerational co-housing, leasehold projects, eco-communities.

Sheet 3: Foundation

What it is: Legal entity with a patrimony destined to a general interest purpose. It has no members, but a board of trustees.

Advantages:

- It can attract donations and legacies.
- Ideal for guarding assets (e.g. land).
- High institutional credibility.

Challenges:

- Less control by direct users.
- Requires high initial capital.
- Management subject to regulation and supervision.

Typical uses: Land trust, ensuring non-speculation.

Sheet 4: Limited company (SL or S.L.L.)

What it is: A company of a commercial nature, it can have social objectives if it is set up as a labour or social economy limited company.

Advantages:

- Flexibility for economic activities.
- Allows the remuneration of worker-members.
- Good fit for hybrid cooperatives.

Challenges:

- Requires start-up capital (albeit low).
- Less community involvement if business is prioritised.
- Need to clearly separate profit-making and social activities.

Typical uses: Management of common services, income generation for the community.

Sheet 5: Community Land Trust (CLT)

What it is: Legal figure that separates the ownership of the land (collective) from the ownership of the building (individual or collective), avoiding speculation.

Advantages:

- It ensures long-term accessibility.
- Combat property speculation.
- It encourages community involvement.

Challenges:

- It requires a strong management entity and institutional partnerships.
- Needs specific regulation in some countries.
- It can be complex for citizens if it is not well accompanied.

Typical uses: Cohousing on community land, social housing with resale value control.

Annex 10: "Who is part of our project?"

🏡 Sheet 1: Residents

Who are they?
They are those who inhabit or will inhabit the project. Their daily lives are at the heart of the process.

What they contribute:

- Direct commitment to coexistence.
- Life experience as a driver for design and improvement.
- Time, energy and often financial resources.

What do they need?

- Clarity about their role and rights.
- Spaces for real participation.
- Support to sustain the process in its different phases.

🤝 Sheet 2: Partner Entities

Who are they?
Social, cultural or environmental organisations that add from their experience, vision or values.

What they contribute:

- Networks and expertise.
- Technical or methodological support.
- Advocacy capacity and social legitimacy.

What do they need?

- Sense of usefulness and impact.
- Clear channels for collaboration.
- Mutual recognition and trust.

💶 Sheet 3: Financing persons or entities

Who are they?
Individuals or organisations that provide financial resources (loans, donations, ethical investment).

What they contribute:

- Capital to start up, sustain or consolidate the project.

- Confidence in social and economic viability.
- Sometimes also financial advice.

What do they need?

- Transparent information.
- Confidence in management.
- Return adjusted to their motivations (economic, social, reputational...).

🧱 Sheet 4: Technical persons

Who are they?
Architects, quantity surveyors, facilitators, engineers, lawyers, economists and other professional profiles.

What they contribute:

- Key expertise to move forward with confidence and rigour.
- Support in complex technical decisions.
- Strategic vision and previous experience.

What do they need?

- Smooth channels of communication.
- A clear fit with governance.
- Recognition of their work beyond the professional service.

🏛️ Sheet 5: Public administration

Who are they?
Local, regional or state institutions that can support or facilitate the project.

What they contribute:

- Public land or transfers.
- Subsidies, advice or legitimacy.
- Potential multiplier effect.

What do they need?

- That the project has a real social impact.
- Transparency and solvency in management.
- That it connects with its strategic lines.

🌱 Sheet 6: Neighbourhood community

Who are they?
People and groups who already live in the area where the project will be developed.

What they contribute:

- Knowledge of the local context and networks.
- Opportunities for collaboration, co-creation and mutual support.
- Cultural and social wealth for coexistence.

What do they need?

- To be taken into account from the outset.
- Spaces for dialogue and participation.
- That the project does not generate displacement or exclusion.

Annex II: "Governing as we feel

🌀 SHEET 1: SOCIO-DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE

What is it?
A circular form of organisation, based on equity, efficiency and distributed participation. Each person can influence the decisions that affect them.

Key elements:

- Interconnected circles that make decisions by consent.
- Roles defined by the organisation itself.
- Periodic evaluations for improvement.
- Total transparency in information and decisions.

What does it promote?

- Balance between structure and flexibility.
- High personal involvement.
- Agility in changes.

Ideal for...
Groups that value horizontality with a clear structure, and want a replicable and formalised model.

🧭 SHEET 2: TEAL GOVERNANCE

What is it?
A model inspired by Frederic Laloux's book Reinventing Organisations, it promotes living, self-organising and evolutionary purpose-driven organisations.

Key elements:

- Total self-management without fixed hierarchies.
- Deep purpose as a compass.
- Safe spaces for authenticity.
- Decisions made by those who have the energy or knowledge to make them.

What does it promote?

- Creativity and autonomy.
- Shared leadership.
- Adaptive, living and responsive processes.

Ideal for...
Mature groups with a strong sense of purpose and a culture of trust. Works best with emotional and formative accompaniment.

🌱 SHEET 3: SPIRAL DYNAMICS

What is it?
An organisational development approach that understands that not all teams are at the same point in time. It uses colours or levels to identify the prevailing culture and adapt governance.

Key elements:

- Levels of awareness and organisational culture.
- Each level has its own ways of making decisions and organising itself.
- There is no best one, but one that is more appropriate to the time of the group.

What does it promote?

- Collective diagnosis of the group's current situation.
- Evolution from the simple to more complex and conscious forms.
- Understanding and empathy for other ways of doing things.

Ideal for...
Groups that want to recognise their moment and design from there, without forcing styles that do not yet fit.

⚖ SHEET 4: TRADITIONAL (HIERARCHICAL) GOVERNANCE

What is it?
A decision-making model with defined roles, formal leaders and a pyramid structure. It is the most common model in traditional companies and associations.

Key elements:

- Clear leadership and centralised decision-making.
- Rules and regulations defined by a management.
- Delegation, not direct participation.

What does it promote?

- Speed and clarity in decision-making.
- Reduced organisational complexity.
- Clarity of roles and responsibilities.

Ideal for...
Projects that do not yet have a participatory culture or that need clear structures at the start. Can be used as a base from which to evolve towards more participatory models.

Annex 12: "Weaving networks, not just houses".

🏘️ 1. **Neighbourhood and local community**

Examples: people living in the neighbourhood, neighbourhood associations, local businesses, parishes, cultural centres.
What can they contribute?

- Knowledge of the territory
- Social and relational support
- Partnerships for shared activities and spaces

What do they need?

- To be heard and included
- Feeling that the project adds and does not displace

Type of relationship: horizontal, collaborative, day-to-day

🏛️ **2. Public administration**

Examples: city council, town planning, social services, county council, municipal housing company.
What can they contribute?

- Public land or cession
- Funding or subsidies
- Legitimacy and institutional connection

What do they need?

- Demonstrated social impact
- Transparency and clarity of the project

Type of relationship: institutional, strategic

🤝 **3. Social partners**

Examples: NGOs, foundations, community associations, social cooperatives.
What can they contribute?

- Experience in social accompaniment

- Participation in governance
- Support for vulnerable groups

What do they need?

- Projects aligned to your values
- Spaces for active cooperation

Type of relationship: synergetic, co-responsible

🛠️ 4. Technicians and professionals

Examples: architects, engineers, quantity surveyors, facilitators, lawyers, economists.

What can they contribute?

- Key technical expertise
- Accompaniment in design, construction and legality
- Realistic view of the process

What do they need?

- Fluid communication with the group
- Fair participation and recognition

Type of relationship: co-creative, functional

💶 5. Ethical funders

Examples: ethical banking, impact funds, crowdfunding, foundations.

What can they contribute?

- Responsible lending and investment
- Financial support for social capital
- Visibility for the project

What do they need?

- Soundness of the economic model
- Clear governance and social return

Type of relationship: contractual, based on trust

👨‍👩‍👧‍👦 6. Friends and allies

Examples: family members, volunteers, personal support networks, mentors.
What can they contribute?

- Emotional and logistical support
- Resources, ideas or dissemination
- Energy and inspiration

What do they need?

- Feeling part of the process
- Spaces open to participation

Type of relationship: emotional, affectionate, voluntary

🧱 7. Local suppliers and SMEs

Examples: carpenters, plumbers, installers, distributors, retailers.
What can they contribute?

- Materials and services
- Local employment and economic sustainability
- Adaptation to specific needs

What do they need?

- Payment stability
- Clear communication and commitment

Type of relationship: economic, reciprocal