



Photo: Chris Grose | Murundaka

COLLABORATIVE HOUSING: A NEW ECONOMICS APPROACH TO HOUSING

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OUTLINE

- A depressing recap of the housing system
- Collaborative housing as a new economics approach to housing
 - Types of collaborative housing
 - Benefits
 - Barriers
 - Pathways
- What are Cohousing Australia doing?



Source: The AGency

'AUSTRALIA'S HOUSING SYSTEM IS BROKEN'

<https://everybodyshome.com.au/>

- There is a severe lack of affordable housing¹
- declining trust in the quality of the speculative housing construction industry²
- energy efficiency of Australian homes is lagging behind international standards³
- loneliness and social isolation are increasingly important issues in Australian communities⁴
- growing and ageing population will place strain on the existing housing stock⁵

Mascot Towers repair bill to hit \$53 million prompting owners to consider selling

By Amy Greenbank

Posted Thu 16 Apr 2020 at 12:38pm, updated Thu 16 Apr 2020 at 10:59pm



The Mascot Towers repair bill is significantly higher than initial estimates. (AAP: Bianca De Marchi)

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2020-04-16/mascot-towers-repair-bill-from-cracks-hits-53-million-dollars/12153368>

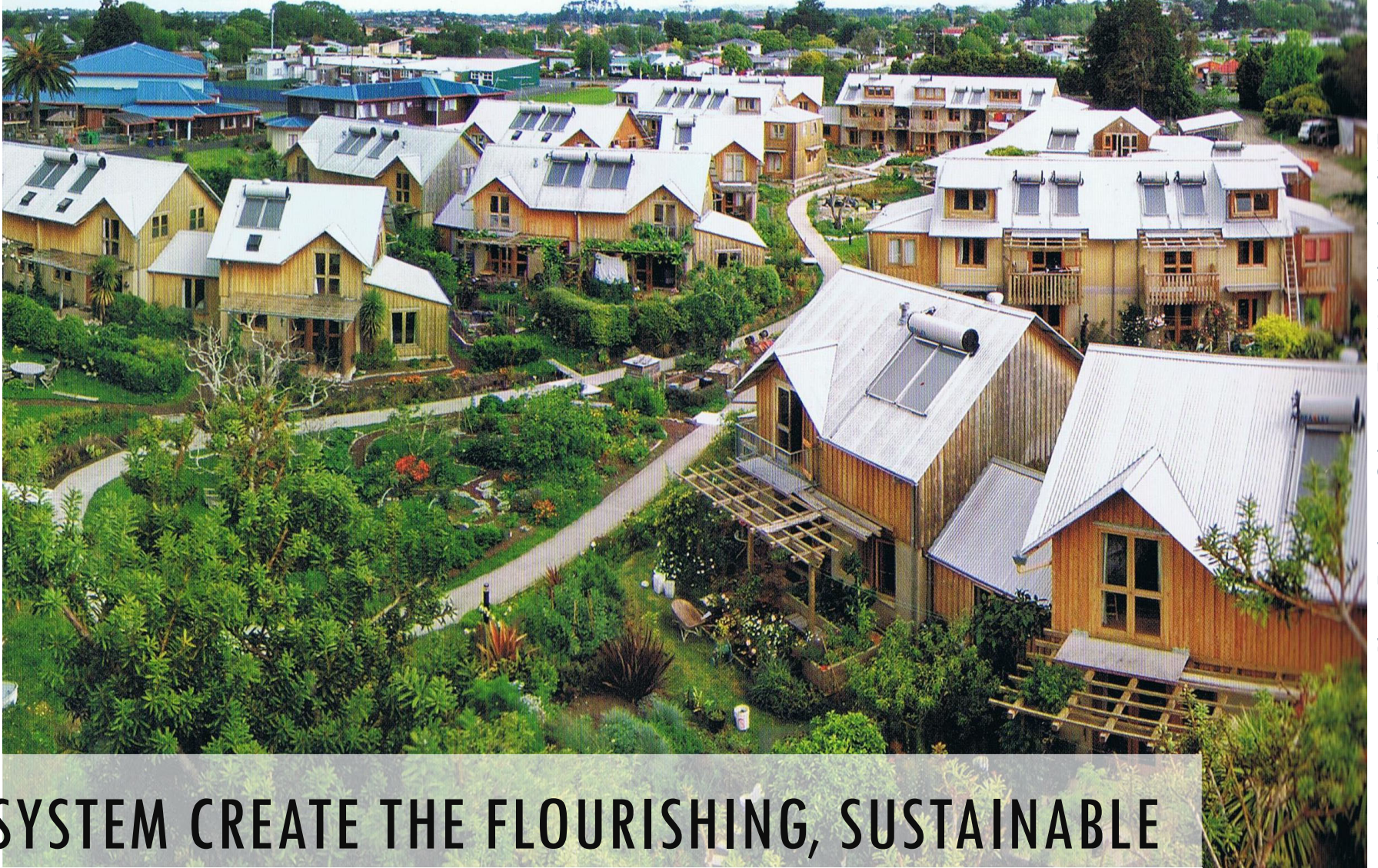


Photo: Earthsong Cohousing Eco-Neighbourhood, NZ

WILL THIS SYSTEM CREATE THE FLOURISHING, SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES WE ALL WANT TO LIVE IN?



Photo: Chris Grose | Murundaka

A NEW ECONOMICS APPROACH TO HOUSING

TYPICAL CHARACTERISTICS OF COLLABORATIVE HOUSING

- Future **residents** are involved in the **design** process to ensure the building meets their needs
- The design includes both **private and shared spaces**, and encourages informal community interaction
- **Residents** are usually actively involved in the **governance** of the property
- Often, but not always, there is a focus on reduced environmental impact
- Huge diversity in size and density
- For all ages and demographics; owners and renters



Cohousing



Building groups



Small blocks



Intentional communities



Cooperatives



Co-living

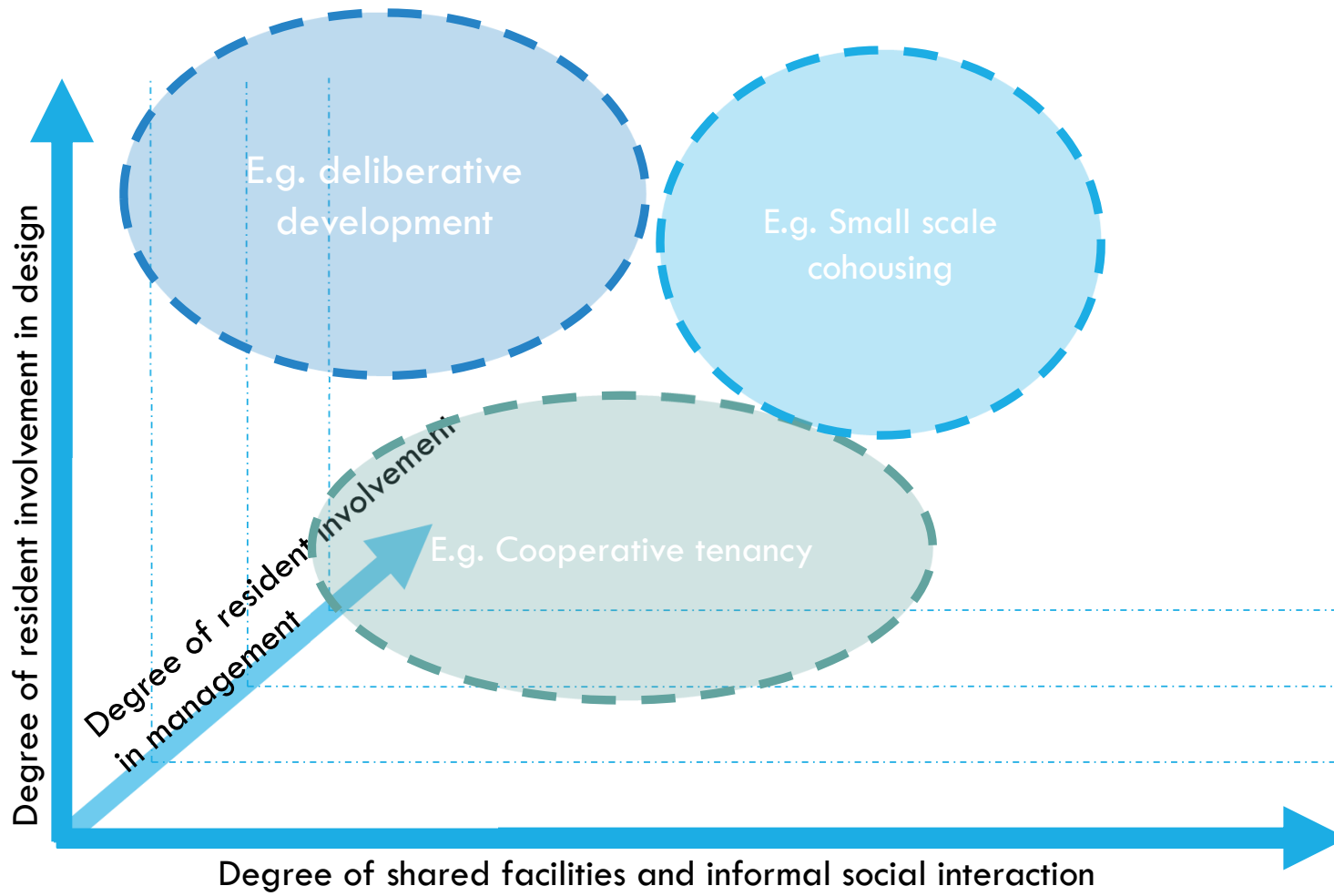


Collaborative retirement



AUSTRALIAN MODELS OF COLLABORATIVE HOUSING

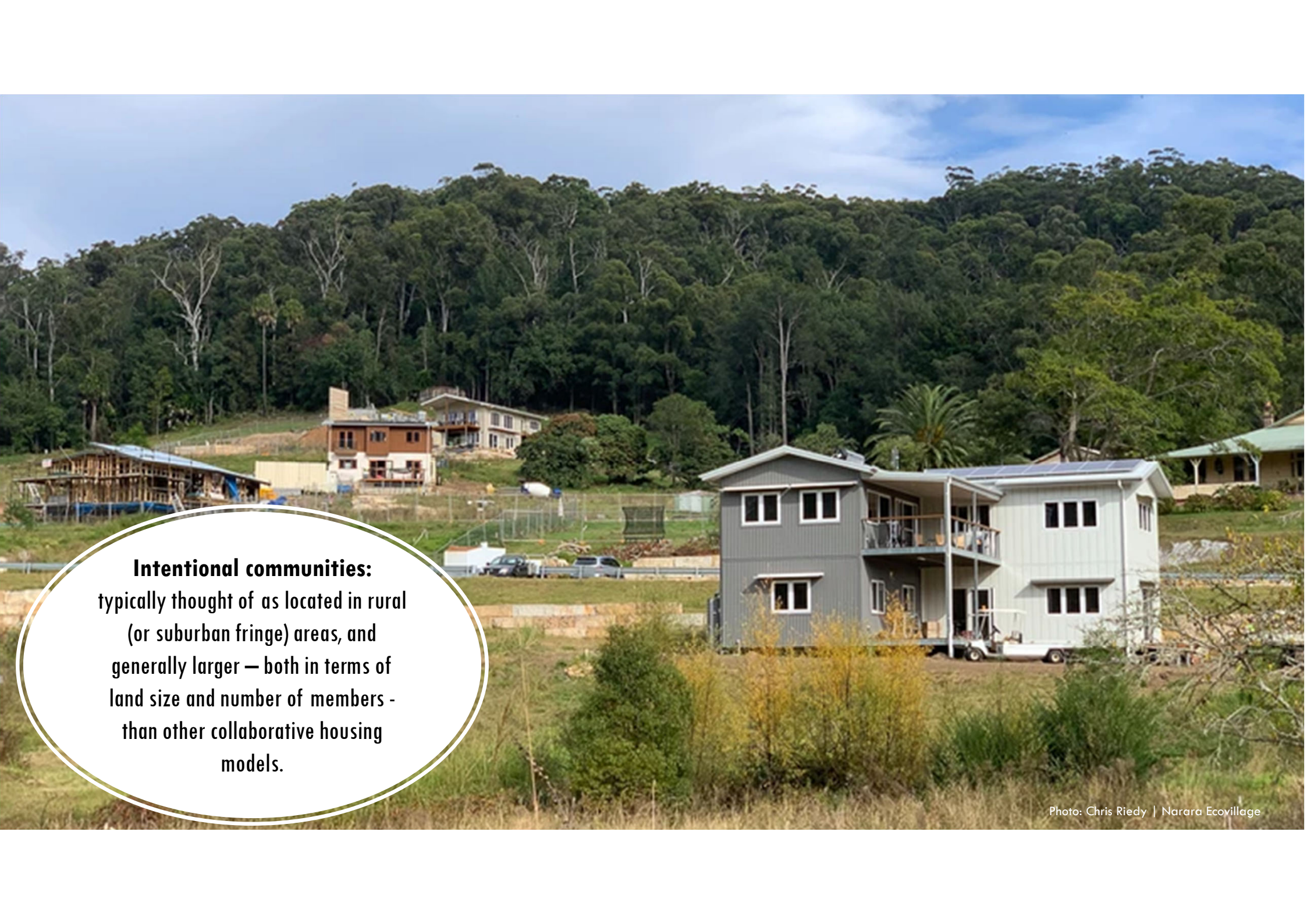
Web guide to Collaborative housing (UTS) - <https://www.collaborativehousing.org.au/>



Characteristic	Cohousing
Leadership	Future residents
Built Form	Varies but often multi- unit
Scale	small to medium
Building strategy	Varies, but new build is common
Financing	Varies, but mixed-mode is common
Title/ ownership	Varies, but generally shared title (community or company title) or cooperative title
Degree of sharing	Medium to high
Demographics	Varies
Governance	Resident governance
Australian examples	Murundaka (Vic) Pinakarri (WA)

Cohousing: one of the most well-known - and collaborative - models of collaborative housing, with co-design, co-management and shared spaces





Intentional communities:
typically thought of as located in rural
(or suburban fringe) areas, and
generally larger — both in terms of
land size and number of members -
than other collaborative housing
models.

Photo: Chris Riedy | Narara Ecovillage

Photo: Katherine Lu
(katherinelu.com)

Small-scale cohousing: A group of friends or family coming together to convert a large existing family house or a couple of adjacent blocks into two to four smaller dwellings with a mix of private and shared spaces.



**Building Groups
(Deliberative
development):** A
designer engages the
future residents in co-
designing an apartment
block with an agreed mix
of private and shared
spaces





Cooperative tenancy:
Tenants form a cooperative to self-manage the property that they occupy, usually with support from a cooperative management company



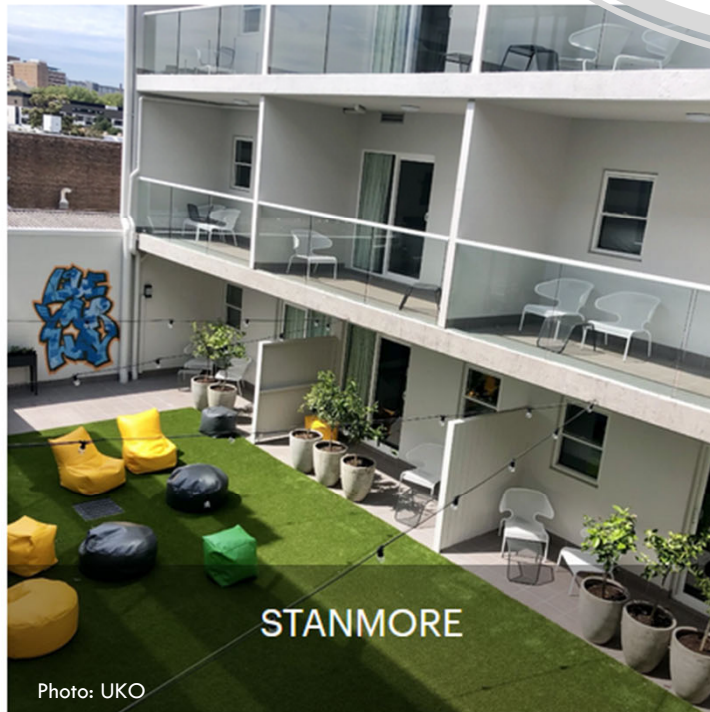
Source: The AGENCY

Collaborative retirement: applying the principles of collaborative housing to retirement housing and seniors living options



Source: The Sheddars

Co-living: For-profit, corporate model, typically developed under new generation boarding house provisions, co-living provides rental accommodation in buildings that also include significant communal spaces, with an emphasis on communality amongst residents



WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS?

Social, wellbeing and isolation

- the design elements (common house, layout etc) that creates spaces for ‘bumping into’ neighbours,
- organised processes to meet your neighbours (initial design, ongoing governance)
- Increased feelings of value, purpose and vitality contributing to their community through governance processing, informal childcare, mentoring, etc.

Sustainability

- Direct sustainability benefits (sharing goods and spaces, food, and energy)
- Enabling factors (shared knowledge, reflexive visioning, community-scale action)



Photo: Matt Daly | Bundagen

Powering the home



Photo: Matt Daly | Bundagen

Gardening

ECOLOGICAL FOOTPRINT REDUCTIONS

- Ecological footprint reduction of ~50% on average c/w comparable community
- ~35% reduction for carbon footprint

Daly, M. (2017).

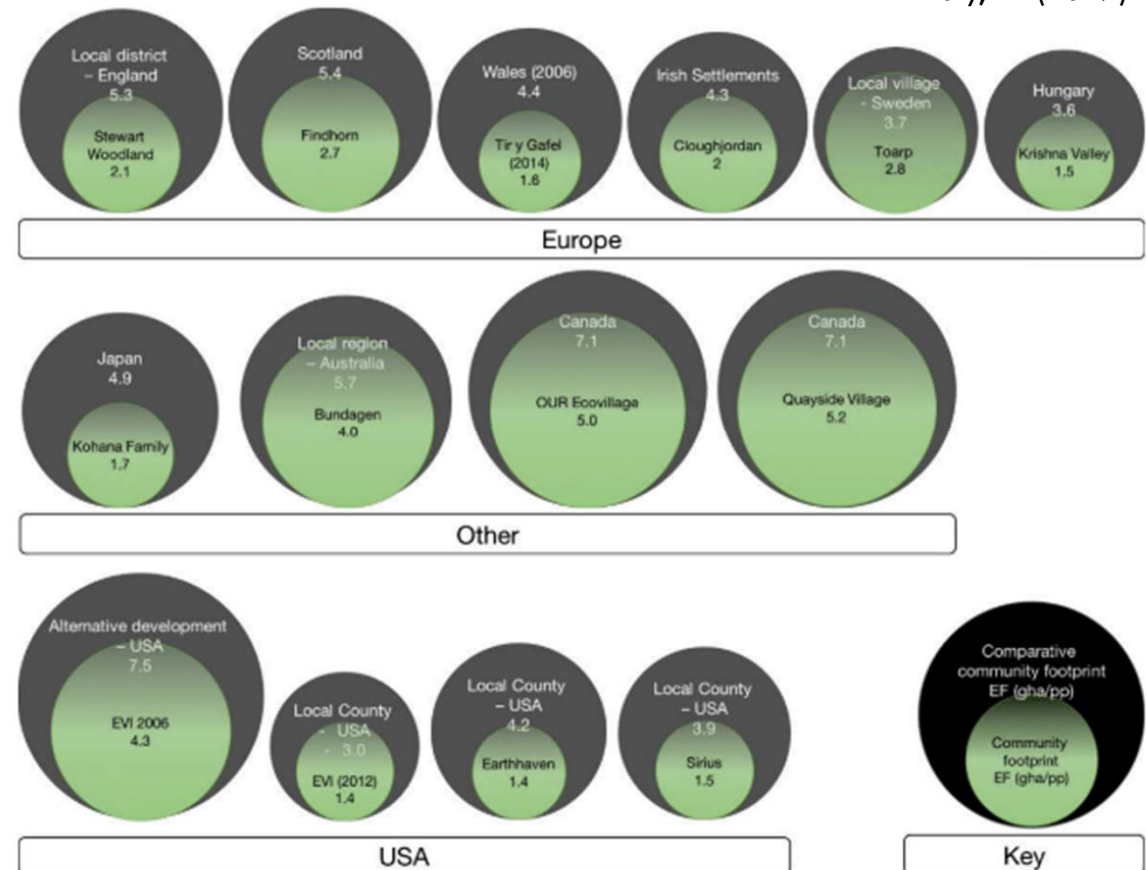


Table 3. Summary of metrics used in the studies reviewed.

Metric used	Number of studies	Number of communities
Ecological footprint (gha/pp)	10	12
Carbon footprint (tCO ₂ /pp/yr)	5	9
Carbon footprint (tCO ₂ -e/pp/yr)	2	3

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS?

Economic and Affordability

- Reduced speculative development risk = less developer profit = reduced cost of housing – some studies show 25% below market rates(5–7).
- Better use and design of common space = efficient use of land

Housing quality

- Incentivises better housing quality and reduced building life cycle cost (e.g. energy)

Sources:

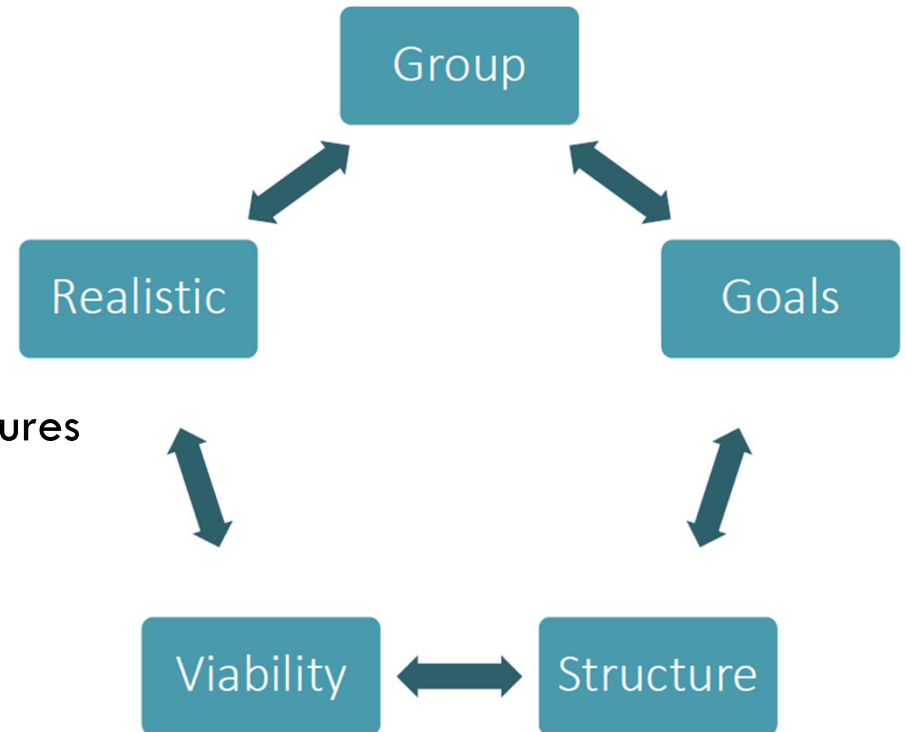
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Sharam A, Bryant LE, Alves T. Making apartments affordable: Moving from speculative to deliberative development [Internet]. Swinburne University of Technology; 2015.

Mcgee C, Benn S. How co-housing could make homes cheaper and greener.pdf. The Conversation. 2015 Apr;1–4.

BARRIERS

- It's difficult!
- Matching financing, group visions, ownership structures
- Working together can be slow:
 - Speed of site acquisitions
 - Finance – developer vs DIY homeowners
- Doing something new has extra difficulty
 - Negotiating the planning process



Source: Karen Deegan – Built for Good

PATHWAYS FOR COLLABORATIVE HOUSING

1. Awareness raising and myth busting

- Fact sheet and guides on collaborative housing
- Demonstration / pilot projects

2. Connect and support interested people

- Facilitation and governance services (Nightingale etc, Co-living)
- Detailed 'how to guides', e.g. on conflict management, financing, approvals, titles

3. Government support and regulatory reform

- Policy support for cohousing as a response to housing challenges (e.g. see CA-NSW submissions to NSW Housing Strategy & SEPP)
- Collaborative housing in major developments (like Germany), e.g. Bays Precinct
- Reforms to remove any barriers related to taxation, pension eligibility, local government planning restrictions

4. Adopt in other housing models

- Retirement villages, mainstream housing

5. Further research

- UOW, UTS. Newcastle/WSU

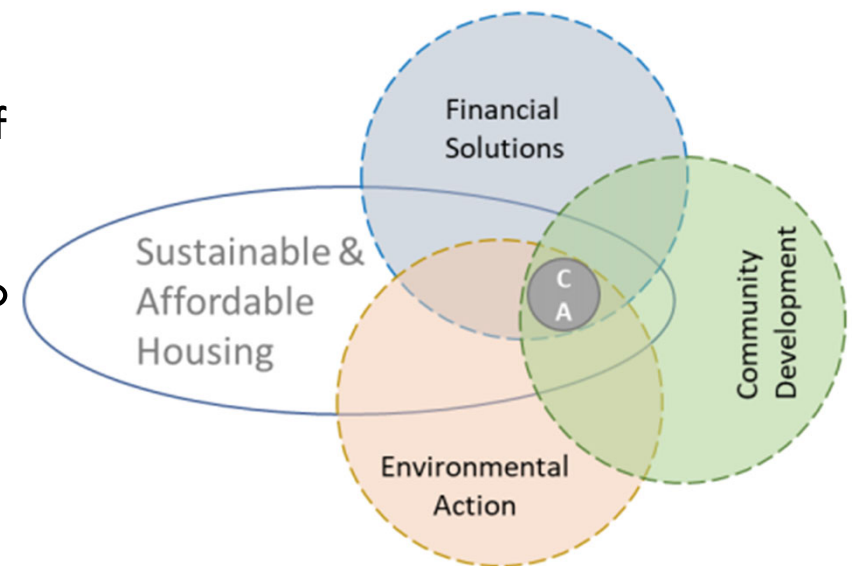
WHO IS COHOUSING AUSTRALIA?



Our Vision: A cohousing community in every suburb and town.

Our Purpose: ... is to position residents at the centre of housing provision; enabling citizens to collectively create housing which provides a place of safety and security, empowering human beings and communities to be better able to live in harmony with economic, environmental, and social contexts and enable more resilient and regenerative futures.

What we do: lobby, educate, research, and live [for] cohousing.



OUR ACTIVITIES

Learn and Educate

<https://transitionaustralia.net/group/cohousing-australia/>

Webinar series: Pathways to finance, Design, Stories from community living, Working with a developer, From NIMBY to YIMBY etc

Network and Connect

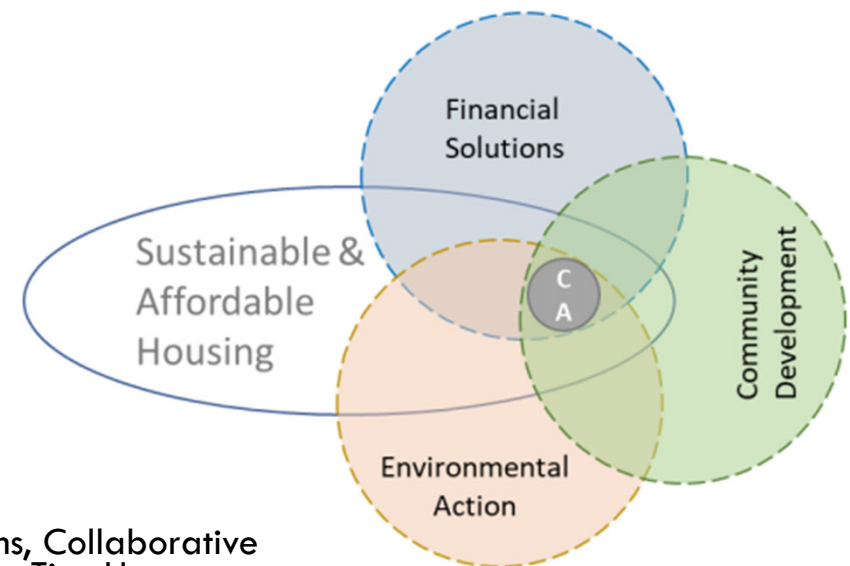
State-based Chapters

<https://www.facebook.com/cohousingaustralia>

info@cohousing.org.au

Lobby:

NSW Housing Strategy, Housing Diversity SEPP, Vic planning submissions, Collaborative Housing Advisory Panel, Mount Alexander Shire Local laws Review - Re: Tiny Houses



REFERENCES AND RESOURCES

- Web guide to Collaborative housing (UTS) - <https://www.collaborativehousing.org.au/>
- Cohousing Australia - <http://communities.org.au/>
- Cohousing fact sheets (UTS research)– available at <http://bit.ly/2sqP7uR>
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THANK YOU

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HOW CAN GOVERNMENT HELP

Here are some ideas that have emerged in our research with stakeholders, for ways that government can help to kickstart collaborative housing in Australia.

3.2 Land disposal and governance

- using government development projects to showcase examples of collaborative housing as part of a diverse, more affordable housing mix that suits the local community
- designating government land to prioritise collaborative housing
- ensuring tender processes allow collaborative housing proposals to participate
- offering deferred settlement of land purchase costs for collaborative housing projects buying land from government
- considering innovative tenures such as Community Land Trusts so that land is managed in a way that ensures long-term affordability
- allocating larger lot sizes (2000m²) in new housing developments for cohousing projects
- recycling government buildings for cohousing and collaborative housing.

Source: Cohousing Australia (NSW Chapters) response to the NSW Housing Strategy July 2020

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3.3 The planning system

- ensure metropolitan and regional planning strategies recognise the potential for collaborative housing to help meet specific goals, targets and outcomes
- create standardised planning definitions of collaborative housing models
- develop model planning guidelines to guide local governments to integrate collaborative housing into their land use planning and development controls
- provide planning incentives for collaborative housing.

Housing Strategy

- There's an opportunity for Affordable Housing providers to consider and build upon their current collaborative principles. There's also an opportunity for policy makers to identify and remove barriers that hinder uptake and delivery of collaborative housing in favour of the status quo (mass-market speculative development, individual ownership or rental options) across the full range of housing types – apartments, boarding houses, small blocks, villas, and more.

Source: Cohousing Australia (NSW Chapters) response to the NSW Housing Strategy July 2020