

Community-Led Housing

A model for affordable housing in Scotland

May 2023



What is community-led housing?

The Communities Housing Trust (CHT) is driving forward a wide range of community-led housing initiatives. But what does this term 'community-led housing' really mean?

Community-led housing is about local people playing a leading and fundamental role in solving their specific housing problems, creating genuinely long-term, affordable homes and strong, resilient communities in ways that are difficult to achieve through mainstream housing alone.

It is a broad movement encompassing a range of approaches, including community groups, development trusts, cooperatives, co-housing, and can involve new build, self-build, regeneration or the use of existing buildings.

Community-led housing is supported by the Scottish Government through the Rural and Islands Housing Fund set up in 2016, which enables community groups to access grants to part-fund community-led housing projects.



Core principles

The core principles of community-led housing are:

- It is a requirement that ongoing community engagement occurs throughout the development process.
- The community does not have to initiate and manage the development, or build the house themselves, although some do.
- The local community group or organisation owns, manages or stewards the homes in a way that suits them.
- It is a requirement that the benefits of the scheme to the local area and/or specified community group are clearly defined and legally protected in perpetuity.

We are supported by the Nationwide Foundation to raise public awareness, support groups to deliver and to create better conditions for the sector to grow.



Community-led housing: benefits and support

Benefits of community-led housing

Community-led housing has many benefits including:

- It provides additional supply that would not be available through mainstream housing delivery alone;
- Generates community support for new homes;
- Helps diversify the house building types and tenure options in communities.
- Assists the local economy and trades provision;
- Empowers and builds capacity within community groups and sets a positive example to others;
- Helps to attract financial investment to communities;
- Improves spaces and the built environment;
- Provides choice for older people needing age appropriate housing;
- Gives younger people an opportunity to realise their housing ambitions;
- Supports sustainable and economically vibrant communities;
- Helps people afford to rent, buy or build their own homes;
- Supports an innovative approach to partnership working and to providing solutions;
- It can support social and economic growth in the community.



How we can help

CHT can provide a mix of services to cater to the different needs of our service users. We have listed some of our services below.

If you think we can help you or your community or would just like some more information on what we do, then please visit our website www.chtrust.co.uk and get in touch: info@chtrust.co.uk.

- Advice and information
- Community meetings
- Housing surveys
- Help with acquiring land
- Consultation appointments
- Facilitate appropriate support and/or partnerships
- Project feasibility
- Support to identify and secure funding
- Project management
- Development assistance
- Bespoke solutions



Community-led housing: funding sources

Rural & Islands Housing Fund

The fund aims to increase the supply of affordable housing of all tenures in rural Scotland. The fund is open to a wide range of applicants and has two main parts:

- A main fund that offers capital support (grants and loans) for direct provision of new affordable housing, and refurbishment of existing empty properties
- A small fund that contributes to feasibility studies

To find out more, go to:

<https://www.gov.scot/policies/more-homes/rural-housing-fund/>

Scottish Land Fund

Offers grants of up to £1 million to help communities take ownership of the land and buildings that matter to them, as well as practical support to develop projects. To find out more, go to:

www.gov.scot/policies/land-reform/scottish-land-fund/

Community & Renewable Energy Scheme

The fund aims to support and grow community and local energy projects throughout Scotland, as well as aiming for a considerable increase in the number of shared ownership installations across the country.

To find out more, go to: www.gov.scot/policies/renewable-and-low-carbon-energy/local-and-small-scale-renewables/#cares



The Scottish Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba

Low Carbon Infrastructure Transition Programme

The Programme aims to support the development of substantive private, public and community low-carbon projects across Scotland through the provision of development support, expert advice and funding.

To find out more, go to: <https://www.hie.co.uk/support/support-for-community-organisations/community-assets/community-energy/>



Highlands and Islands Enterprise
Iomairt na Gàidhealtachd 's nan Eilean

The Robertson Trust

Strengthening Communities : recognises the value of building on local assets and wish to support organisations and communities which come together to create meaningful, sustainable solutions to address local need.

To find out more, go to: www.therobertsontrust.org.uk/what-we-fund/our-funding-strands/strengthening-communities



Nationwide Community Grants

Local housing organisations with housing solutions can apply for grants up to £50,000.

To find out more, go to: www.nationwidecommunitygrants.co.uk



Community-led housing: examples

Tomintoul, Cairngorms

The Tomintoul and Glenlivet Development Trust (TGDT) had identified through community consultation that there was a demand within the community for good quality affordable housing and are building 12 affordable homes. Construction completed in Spring 2023.

"Like many rural communities, ours has a shortage of good quality houses which are affordable to local people. That shortage means local families have to move away to find a home and new families can't move in.

With CHT's assistance we have developed a project which will develop the affordable housing our community needs on the site of a disused and derelict school which is an eyesore in the centre of the village. The homes built will allow families to stay in the community and new families to move in."

Oliver Giles, TGDT Manager



Staffin, Isle of Skye

With the Staffin Development Trust, we worked on a development of six homes, two commercial units for rent, and a new health centre in partnership with NHS Highland, to replace the existing building which is not fit for purpose. With no new affordable homes built in Staffin for 25 years, and an ageing and falling population, there was a strong need for the homes to help sustain the community. The build completed in February 2022, and the homes are a mix of social rent with Lochalsh & Skye Housing Association, community rent with Staffin Community Trust, and discounted sale with CHT.



Gairloch, Wester Ross

Situated in the Wester Ross village of Gairloch sits the award-winning development of Achtercairn.

CHT worked in partnership with the community to form and chair the Achtercairn Development Group, a consortium of around 50 local, regional and national partners, to provide 25 affordable homes (19 social rent and 6 low-cost home ownership), which are managed by the Highland Council, Albyn Housing Society, and CHT.

The development also includes the GALE Centre, Scotland's first public building to be awarded 'passive house' status; a community shop and cafe; classroom for the University of the Highlands & Islands; Gairloch Farm Shop; Air Training Corps. The development has received European, UK and Scottish awards.

