

# Alderslowe Permaculture

## Clachan Reflects Earth Care, People Care and Fair Share

By Lusi Alderslowe: February 2020

Clachan aims to establish a co-housing community in North Glasgow which will be based on permaculture ethics, principles and design methodology. This document explains in what way this proposal reflects the Permaculture Ethics of Earth Care, People Care and Fair Share.

### Earth Care

Care of the Earth refers to both minimising our negative impact on the environment and maximising our positive impact on the environment. Ways which Clachan will be caring for the Earth include:

- Sharing of resources: spare bedroom, washing machines, tools, storage, cooking communally etc. This reduces the size of each house, therefore its energy use and footprint. The common house, whilst an impact of itself, significantly reduces the footprint of the other housing, therefore with sufficient houses, overall it reduces the buildings' footprint.
- One small car park with a car-share scheme. A car requires as much energy to build it as it uses throughout its lifetime, therefore reducing the number of cars, as well as providing electric charging stations will significantly reduce the environmental impact over standard car use.
- Cycle storage will keep bicycles dry, enabling residents to use them, thus reducing transport emissions.
- Improving biodiversity: Planting of trees, enhancing biodiversity within the gardens on site as well as the food growing area. Permaculture systems such as forest gardens are known to improve biodiversity whilst yielding food for humans.
- Growing food for themselves and others in the local community reduces pesticide use (which are oil intensive as well as killing biodiversity) and food miles.
- Carbon sequestration through planting trees and building soils.
- Rainwater catchment and use: reduces flooding, sewage overloading, and reduces mains water usage (which has a lot of embedded energy).
- Soil building. Growing food in a permaculture system increases the organic matter and living beings in the soil, so literally earth care!
- Passive solar design including south-facing windows and high insulation levels - significantly reduces heating requirements.
- Using the power of the sun for renewable electricity generation and solar thermal (for space and water heating).
- Bulk food orders will reduce food packaging and make organic produce affordable.

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## People Care

This involves looking after oneself and other people both in terms of meeting our material and non-material needs in a way that is not preventing other people from meeting their needs, now or in the future. People care is embedded in the Clachan Co-Housing design in the following ways:

- Warm, dry homes which are well insulated and ventilated (e.g. using Mechanical Ventilation Heat Recovery System, which means the indoor air quality will remain high without having to open windows thus lose heat) and provide all the usual spaces for living, sleeping, toileting, cooking etc.
- Sharing of resources: pooled resources such as tools, washing machines, cars will give residents access to these with no need to purchase them (affordability).
- Shared meals and common house facilities will promote community cohesion, reduce isolation, cooperation and understanding.
- A mixed generation setting will enable older people to feel more connected to younger generations, and vice versa, reaping benefits of intergenerational learning, volunteering, safety, tolerance, and more.
- Beautiful, diverse outdoor spaces including an al fresco dining area, will encourage people to get fresh air, vitamin D, and engage with other members of the community.
- Play area within the complex will give children a place to socialise and play outdoors, whilst being in a safe space, supporting parents too.
- A pedestrian access, separate to car park, will encourage people to walk and reduce the visual intrusion of cars.
- Growing pesticide free food on site will increase the nutrition of the food, and keep costs low.

## Fair share

Setting limits to consumption, using only a fair share of resources, and redistributing any surplus back to Earth care and people care are key aspects of permaculture design. Clachan Co-Housing will do this in many ways, including:

- Shared resources, food-growing, meals, child care, tools, domestic appliances, cars and cycle storage will enable residents to use fewer resources and redistribute surplus.
- The culture of the community will enable sharing of surplus harvests, time, energy and other resources to enable inclusion of every member whatever their income level.
- Other member of the local community (outwith Clachan) will benefit by improved safety, reduced flooding risk, occasional use of the common house (e.g. the LILAC common house is used as a polling station), reduced litter (Clachan will organise litter picks of the nearby land), being able to grow or barter for food, increased biodiversity, and more.