Comparing co-housing: overview

1. Emerging trend Europe-wide
2. Comparative features
3. Various incentives
4. Co-housing as urban strategy
5. Gender perspective

UK: ‘Together we create a new world’

(Diggers & dreamers)

LLAC means Low Impact Living Affordable Community. We are the UK’s first affordable ecological cohousing project, a community of 20 households, a common house, based in Bramley, West Leeds. We are a pioneering and award winning project.

The aim of LLAC is to:
Reduce our impact on the environment
Respond to the housing crisis
Make a positive contribution to the surrounding community.

For news of upcoming social events
here. Everyone welcome to come along and meet us. Find out more about the project, eat and hear a part or a matter.

All Photos in this website are courtesy of Andy Land (projectdiggers.co.uk)

Flanders: ‘Let us create villages in town’
France: ‘More than a roof over the head’

Habicoop

La coopérative d’habitation, c’est plus que du logement.

Présentation d’Habicoop

Marche Marandola
Géna Pelle Lefebvre

Cohabiter pour vivre mieux

HABICOOP

France: ‘More than a roof over the head’

Germany: Wohngemeinschaft-Baugruppe

NL: Centraal Wonen & ‘CPO’

NL:

Centraal

Wonen
& ‘CPO’

Terbregse.nl

Guest-room

Apartments

Car-sharing

Car-park

Meals, parties

school- and sports ‘taxi’

House-/dog-/cat-sitting

Governance & maintenance

11-12-2014

11-12-2014

Terbregse.nl

Bicycle shed

Garden

Apartments

Office

Co-housing Chiaravalle

Italy, Spain: reviving a tradition
Small numbers, large impact, growing body of research, but little monitoring

> Comparability in search of framework

2. Comparative features

'urban oasis'
[Haquebord]

'pragmatic utopia'
[Sargisson]

"The unifying factor is creating alternatives for standardized, one-household units. Projects may show a mix of row houses with apartments for singles and seniors, and important differences in the housing plans." [Sangregorio]

Collectively developed and self-managed housing with shared spaces: manifold typology
DIY society & retreat of the state

Types of definition
- Self-governance, participation
- Elderly: institutional involvement
- Alternative to mainstream
- Distance to society
- Sustainability / ecology
- Community-building
- Idealist remote [Meijering et al.]
- Time & Historical context
  - Utopistes, Castors, Cité Radieuse (France)
  - Domestic work (Sweden)
- Pragmatic idealism
- Bougruppe …

Co-building or cohousing?

Institutional partners

LVCW Dutch cohousing federation
BIEB co-building consultants
Integrate into planning process:

- DNR: new regulations for architects
- De Regie: new profession ‘coaching’
- Catalogue: preconceived models
- Zoning plan: software generated
- Still no new law for co-housing initiatives

Co-housing ≠ Gated Community

Different generations of projects

Generation 1980-90s
- CW Romolen, 1980s
  - 1968 and environmental awakening
  - No environmental standard
  - Energy scarcity > saving
  - National policy = social housing
  - 33-77 units, rental
  - Urban renewal, new

Evolution of context

21st century
- Spoiled consumer and active citizen
- Established environmental standards for housing
- Energy label, EPC
- National policy = privatization
- 48-96 units, HO/mix
- Urban extension, new
3. Different incentives

- Changing household structures
- Ageing populations
- Young families back to the inner city
  - Keeping sub-urban qualities
  - Mutualise resources during building and in everyday life
- Environment and health

Collectively developed and self-managed housing with shared spaces

Flanders: land scarcity & urban quality

K. Van Herck, B. De Meulder, Wonen in Meervoud, SUN, Amsterdam, 2009

Germany: aging, shrinking

Tübingen, Co-housing as urban strategy
France: grassroot to government

La loi ALUR du 24 mars 2014 permet la reconnaissance du statut de coopérative d'habitants.

NL: national housing policy 2000

- Privatization of building and property
- Improve quality inner cities
- Consumer-oriented; special needs
- Goal: 2005 = 30% self-managed housing

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Eco-quartier Strasbourg

Encouraging home-ownership
4. Co-housing as urban strategy

- Local Authority:
  - Pro-active director (Tübingen, Almere)
  - Tandem (Strasbourg)
  - Facilitator (Hamburg, Amsterdam)

High expectations for urban development

**LoExpectations**
- Social cohesion
- Citizens’ involvement
- Mutual help (aging population)
- Create sustainable environments
- Taylor made housing
- Mixed income areas

**DOubts**
- but only inside the projects?
- Or extra management tasks?
- or creative middle class?
- or exclusive environments?
- Planning depends on quality of partners

**Urban form**

**NL: breaking with Masterplanning**

- MW2 Meander, Zwolle
- Floorplan
5. Gender perspective of cohousing

“Cohousing developments attracted unconventional households and women with more egalitarian gender ideologies compared to ‘new urbanist’ developments. Women living in cohousing developments spent a lower percentage of their time at home doing housework and had more egalitarian gender ideologies compared to women living in ‘new urbanist’ developments.”

Toker 2010

11-12-2014
Organizing the everyday

Typically feminin time-space pattern

- Domestic work
- Care for children/dependants
- Interrupted journeys
- Complex days
- Public transport
- Lower average income
- Longer lives
- Expedient (less play)

Feminist Utopia?

Factors affecting the control of daily life

(Horelli & Wallin 2005)

- Services
- Mobility
- Public transportation
- Time to hobbies
- Work place and work hours
- Division of family work
- Child care and domestic chores
- Individuals capabilities
- Control of daily life
- Local infrastructure and governance
Conclusion 1: self-organized proximity

- Mutualize resources
- Create community
- Facilitate everyday life
- Mix: income, generation, use, ...
- Decentralized energy networks
- Short circuit recycling
- ‘prosumers’

> BUT:

Planning results depend on quality of institutional partners

Conclusion 2: Comparative studies

- Mapping, zoning, plans
- Technical drawings, briefings
- Building application
- Energy calculations
- Reports of building process

International comparative research to:
- Identify the bottlenecks and the margins for project realization
- Recognize impact & urban qualities
- Understanding how planning is receptive to new housing models > innovation

> Framework of comparison to be clearly defined

Conclusion 3: Gender perspective

- Strong presence of women in the everyday organization of co-housing
- Co-housing as alternative way of living is potentially an emancipatory environment
- Proximity and collective self-management are no guarantee for breaking with gender roles
- “social control” & stepping out?

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