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Continuing Learning Group

Lancaster University
A community designed and managed by the residents where each household is private but community spirit is encouraged through shared facilities. There are a common house, shared gardens, guest rooms, laundry facilities.
Forgebank, run by Lancaster Cohousing, is a carbon neutral eco-cohousing development consisting of 41 certified private passive houses with communal facilities, low carbon workspace and a riverside woodland habitat.

Its vision is to be cutting edge example of sustainable design and living / acting as a catalyst and inspiration for significant improvements in the sustainability of new development.

It combines sustainable building techniques, energy saving technologies, renewable energy generation, and peer support for behaviour change. As well as being an extraordinary place to live, it aims to show that living sustainably need not be a hair shirt experience, but can be comfortable, affordable and fun.

Cohousing combines the advantages of private homes with communal facilities. Forgebank includes: a Common House for regular communal meals and gatherings; a shared laundry; shared guest rooms; children’s room; bike shed; community shop and workspace. It is designed to encourage casual social interaction, with 1-3 bed homes clustered around a pedestrian street.
Energy use is minimal

Passivhaus is a standard of building including insulation, window sizes and orientation, airtightness, mechanical ventilation. To achieve a 90% reduction in energy costs. Research shows that high energy bills are a leading factor in the slide into poverty and this affects many older people.
Outdoor space is important to maintain health

Older people benefit from access to outdoor space and the opportunity for some light gardening activity.
Outdoor space.
The Street

Car free and well lit. The homes are clustered around the street so that occupants will regularly see their neighbours/
Land nearby for sale
Progress so far...formed a company, liaised with local council, participated in design workshops, opened a bank account, agreed a purchase price,,, found a lender (Ecology Building Society, visited other co-housing, set up a website, spent approx £10,000 grant money had a swim in the river on a glorious summers day.
Next Steps...

• To find more potential residents.
• To apply for planning permission.
• To agree final design details and materials.
• To agree policies on admissions to the community and all aspects of living there.
• To undertake training in communication and decision making.
• ...and all live happily ever after!