



# A NEW COHOUSING PROJECT in Northwest Sheffield S6

## About Cohousing

This is when a group of people own and democratically manage a site and the housing and amenities there, and then buy or rent their own private dwelling from the group. As well as the individual homes, there are shared outdoor and indoor areas, usually with space to cook and eat together and guest rooms for visitors. Cohousing continues to grow across the UK as a way of returning to greater social interaction and reducing our environmental impact through greater sharing.

**For more information:**  
[www.cohousing.org.uk](http://www.cohousing.org.uk)

## The story so far

The top of Spider Park, off Sevenfields Lane, in the Wadsley/Wisewood area of Sheffield, was sold by the City Council for housing in exchange for a new playground nearby and, in July 2020, planning permission was granted.

Five Rivers Cohousing and timber-frame construction company Oakworth Construction then worked in partnership to design a custom-build cohousing project, built to high environmental standards and respecting the surrounding open space.

When choosing a name for the new road to serve our scheme, we consulted with a local historian and other community residents. On hearing that Spider Park has long been known informally as 'Top Field', we opted for

**Top Field View.**

## About Five Rivers Cohousing

We are a not-for-profit Limited Company set up in 2012 to develop a cohousing project in our city. For some ten years, we bid for various sites but without success, particularly when competing with private developers. Meanwhile, we worked on our aims and vision, building our membership, the design and financing of our scheme and promoting cohousing within the council .

In 2020, a grant from Homes England provided welcome help with the development phase. With the generous addition of members' loans, we were able to hire a Development Consultant, Financial Consultant, and Employers' Agent.

Our core group has expanded to a group of twenty-eight adults consisting of families with children, couples and single people. Members are busy learning and sharing the practical skills needed to develop and manage our scheme in an eco-friendly way, as well as planning a menu of creative and sociable opportunities to offer in our lovely large Common House. At the time of writing, we have just two homes still to allocate, but will operate a waiting list for future vacancies. So, if our scheme sounds of interest to you, do please contact us or check out our website for the current situation.

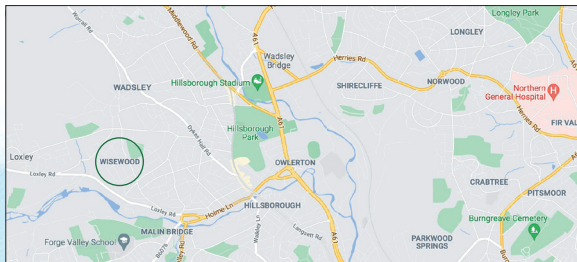
Our long-standing intention to create a diverse and multi-generational community, enjoying and promoting a more sustainable and neighbourly way to live, is well underway!



Residential weekend at LILAC Leeds cohousing May 2023  
- a taster of community living for 5R

## Location

The site is about 1.2 acres, framed by open grassland and mature trees, with lovely views as the open space falls southwards. It is close to Wadsley and Loxley Commons, and the amenities of Hillsborough. It's easy to get into town via tram or bus from Hillsborough and equally easy to get out to the countryside.



Site plan: 1 to 15  
Top Field View,  
Sheffield

## Our design for the site

Top Field View has 22 units, ranging from 1-bed and 2-bed apartments to 2-bed and 3-bed houses, clustered around a substantial Common House with space to meet and socialise, as well as a laundry and guest bedrooms. All are built to high environmental standards, with triple glazing, underfloor heating, solar panels and air source heat pumps.

Outside shared space is designed to include communal growing areas, wildlife friendly spaces, bike storage, and play areas. We plan to have as few cars as possible, moving towards an electric car share scheme, and encourage the use of bikes and public transport whenever possible.

We aim to interact positively with the local community, and held information sessions during the build phase to meet local community neighbours and discuss our plans. The public right of way, across the top of the site, will be enhanced with low level lighting, and we'll play an active part in maintaining the open space to the south.

*"There is no other area of the city I would rather live. Close by is a pleasant community café, good pubs, a Church with Community Rooms, a convenience store with a Post Office, and an excellent fish and chip shop.*

*Nearby Hillsborough is well-served by Supertram, doctors, dentists, a Library and a shopping centre. There are two sport and leisure centres within easy reach. Sheffield Wednesday's ground is nearby. There's Hillsborough Park down the hill, and an ambitious playground and community space has been created alongside the local primary school. It feels a safe and friendly place to live."*

*A Five Rivers member and long-time local resident*



The site in July 2023





**Clockwise from above:** Early design meeting with Oakworth team; View of the build (July 2023); Breaking ground ceremony (Dec 2022); Common House main room (July 2023)

## Funding the scheme

Funding the build has been achieved with a significant loan from the Ecology Building Society, supplemented by low interest loans from members and supporters. This generous support from cohousing supporters has been essential in improving affordability and helping us to include 3 rental options managed by the Share Instead housing co-op. We hope to continue to achieve additional affordable options in the future, so if you are able to support us with a low interest loan (or other kinds of support,) we would be delighted to hear from you. Please get in touch and we will send you fuller information.

Please also pass on our details to anyone you think might be interested in joining or supporting our project.

**Thank you!**

## Timescale

The build began with a 'Breaking Ground' ceremony in December 2022, and proceeded at a great pace, with expected completion in early November 2023.

## Management of the scheme

The scheme is owned and managed by Five Rivers Cohousing Co. Ltd., and democratically controlled by all those living at Top Field View



## Contact Us:

For more information about our project, please email us or check us out on the Internet and Facebook.

Website: [www.fiveriverscohousing.org.uk](http://www.fiveriverscohousing.org.uk)

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August 2023