

Cohousing planned for Comiston

Cohousing in Southern Scotland (CHOISS) is to make a bid for Comiston Farmhouse, owned by The City of Edinburgh Council and which is currently on the market for sale.

If the group is successful then this could be one of the first ever cohousing projects in Scotland.

A type of home ownership where people want to become neighbours, usually within an environmentally friendly setting cohousing involves a sharing culture such as a common building with a shared kitchen and dining room. It is commonplace in Scandinavia and in North America.

It is not communal living, but there are shared resources including a laundry, garden space, tools and cars, and it is billed as an antidote to loneliness.

Comiston Farmhouse sits within an acre of land between Fairmilehead and Oxgangs.

Architect Dr Richard Atkins, who is working with CHOISS on the project, said: "Co-housing means people have their own homes – healthy, energy-efficient, accessible and stylish – but also access to shared areas to mix with other people when they choose.

"Co-housing addresses the financial, environmental challenges

of modern living – focusing very much on affordable, sustainable living in attractive homes within friendly communities.

“This project will also return Comiston Farmhouse to being an asset to the local community, and demonstrate that co-housing is affordable and replicable on a wide scale.”

A spokesperson for CHOISS said: “Comiston Cohousing hopes the cohesion and resilience of everyone involved, working together as a group, will achieve our vision.

“Our plan is to establish a legal entity, such as a co-operative, a company limited by guarantee or a ‘Mutual Home Ownership Society’ which has been piloted by Low Impact Living Affordable Community (LILAC) Cohousing in Leeds.

“We are in conversation with a Building Society and other sources of potential funding while individual ‘pioneers’ are totting up their savings or getting their homes valued.”

It is expected the council will be setting a closing date for bids around the end of May.

The Comiston Co-housing group hopes the City of Edinburgh Council and Scottish Government will accept their bid to purchase Comiston Farmhouse, providing an opportunity for Edinburgh citizens to explore a new way of addressing the serious housing crisis, working towards net zero targets and promoting healthy communities.

