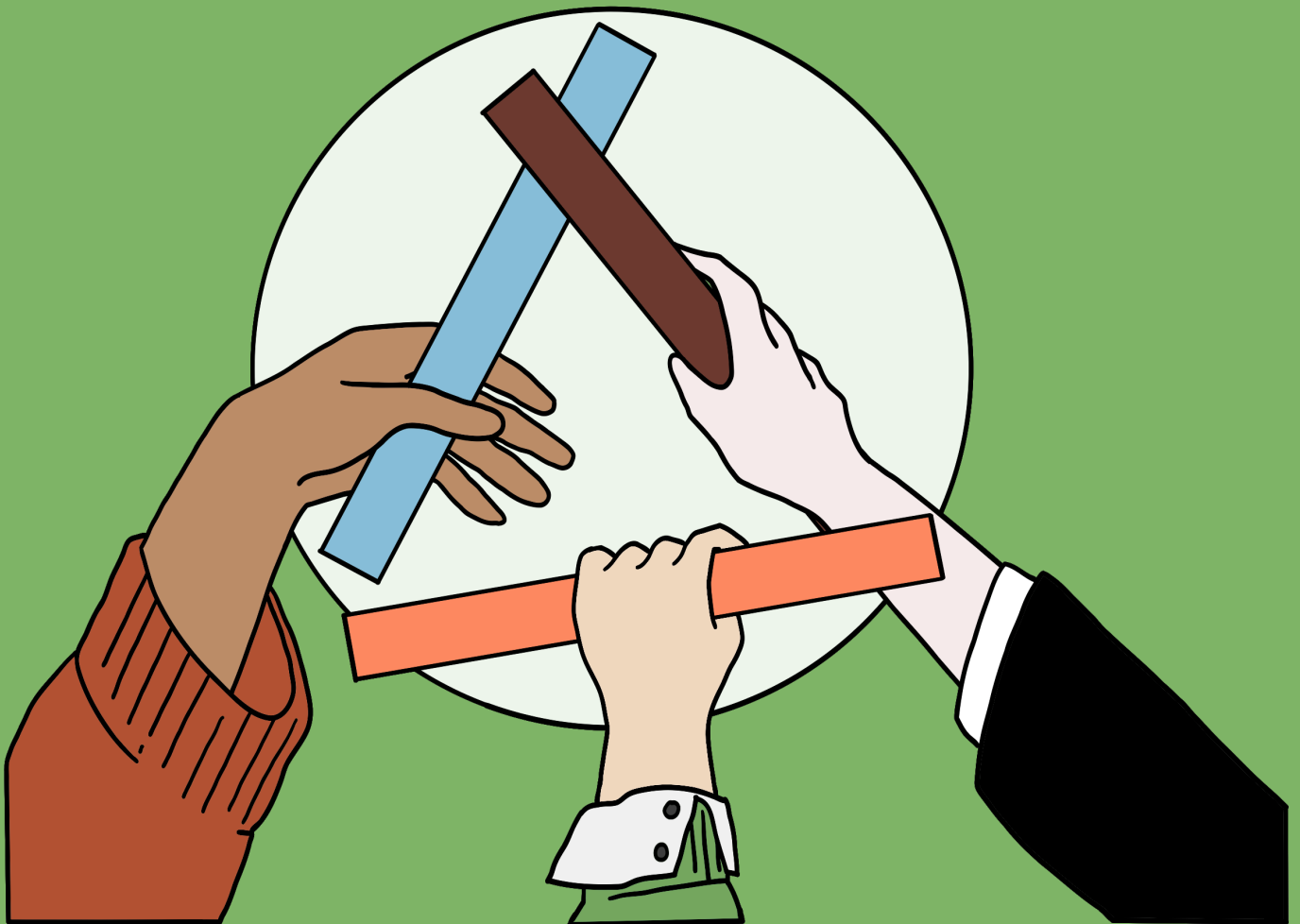




homefolk

communityowned
tinyhouse villages
for ecohealth

key document detailing homefolk's concept, project context and technical considerations





3	homefolk
4	project context
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8	site selection process
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homefolk

INTRODUCTION TO HOMEFOLK

'Homefolk Housing UK CIC' - AKA 'homefolk' - is dedicated to pioneering innovative solutions for affordable housing in the UK. We are a volunteer led and organised social enterprise.

Our mission is to create a
sustainable, community-driven housing model

that can both
respond to the housing crisis and promote social well-being

We work on a 'no-burnout culture' basis and aim to implement the values of our project (sustainability, affordability, community wellbeing) into our working processes as much as the ends of our project. We are working at present from a concept towards a pilot.



OUR MISSION

Our project is a cross-disciplinary approach that integrates

**architecture,
law, and health**

to create a genuinely novel holistic housing solution. The project will engage students in understanding how housing impacts health and well-being, particularly in the context of London's (un)affordable housing crisis, loneliness, access to green space and social isolation.

24% of people in London experience poverty after they've paid for housing ¹.

1. Trust for London. 2024. Proportions of people in poverty before and after housing costs (2022/23). Retrieved on 05.11.2024 from: <https://trustforlondon.org.uk/data/poverty-before-and-after-housing-costs/>



HOUSING IN THE UK

The cost of UK housing has intensified due to a combination of factors, including a

chronic shortage of affordable housing, rising property prices, and stagnant wages

Demand for housing has outstripped supply, exacerbated by limited new construction and restrictive planning policies.



Only **36%** of the required affordable homes have been built each year¹.

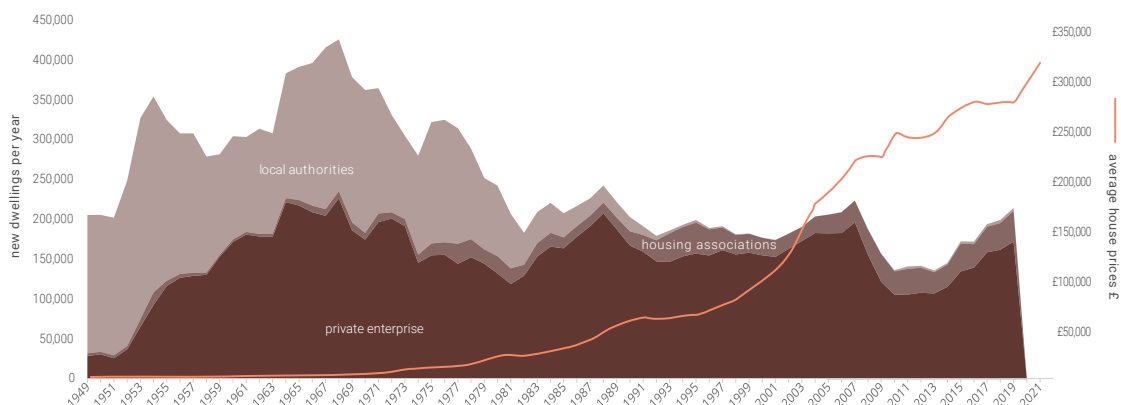
In 2022, house prices in England were **8.2x** the median wage².

HOUSING PRICES

The buy-to-let market has driven up prices, making homeownership increasingly unattainable for many,

particularly younger generations

Economic pressures, including inflation and increased living costs, further strain household budgets, pushing more people into private rentals and precarious living situations. The result is a cycle of inequality and insecurity that affects millions across the country.



Graph above: Housing costs (red) vs. Groups producing housing (maroon)

1. RIBA: Social Housing Report 2024 (2024) Foundations for the Future: a new delivery model for social housing. Retrieved on 07.10.2024 from: <https://www.architecture.com/about/policy/social-housing-report-in-full>

2. Cromarty, H. and Barton, C., 2023. What is affordable housing? House of Commons Library. Retrieved on 09.10.2024 from: <https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/cbp-7747/>



LAND OWNERSHIP

Private land ownership in the UK has been a significant factor in exacerbating the housing crisis. A large portion of land is held by private owners, which restricts the availability of land for new housing developments. This concentration can drive up land prices, making it

more challenging for developers to build affordable homes

Additionally, the speculative nature of land ownership often leads to land being withheld from development in anticipation of higher future values, further limiting housing supply.



HEALTH

Housing has a profound impact on health, influencing both physical and mental well-being. Poor housing conditions such as

inadequate heating, dampness, and overcrowding

can lead to respiratory issues, infections, and other health problems. Unstable or insecure housing situations can contribute to stress, anxiety, and depression, affecting mental health. Access to safe and affordable housing is also linked to overall quality of life, as it can determine proximity to essential services, green spaces, and community resources.

57% of 1,552 London residents experienced mould³.

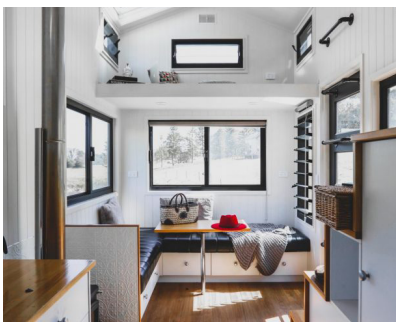


concept overview

THE TINYHOME

For folk unfamiliar with the term, tinyhomes are a small living approach where people live in homes much more compact than our traditional brick-and-mortar spaces.

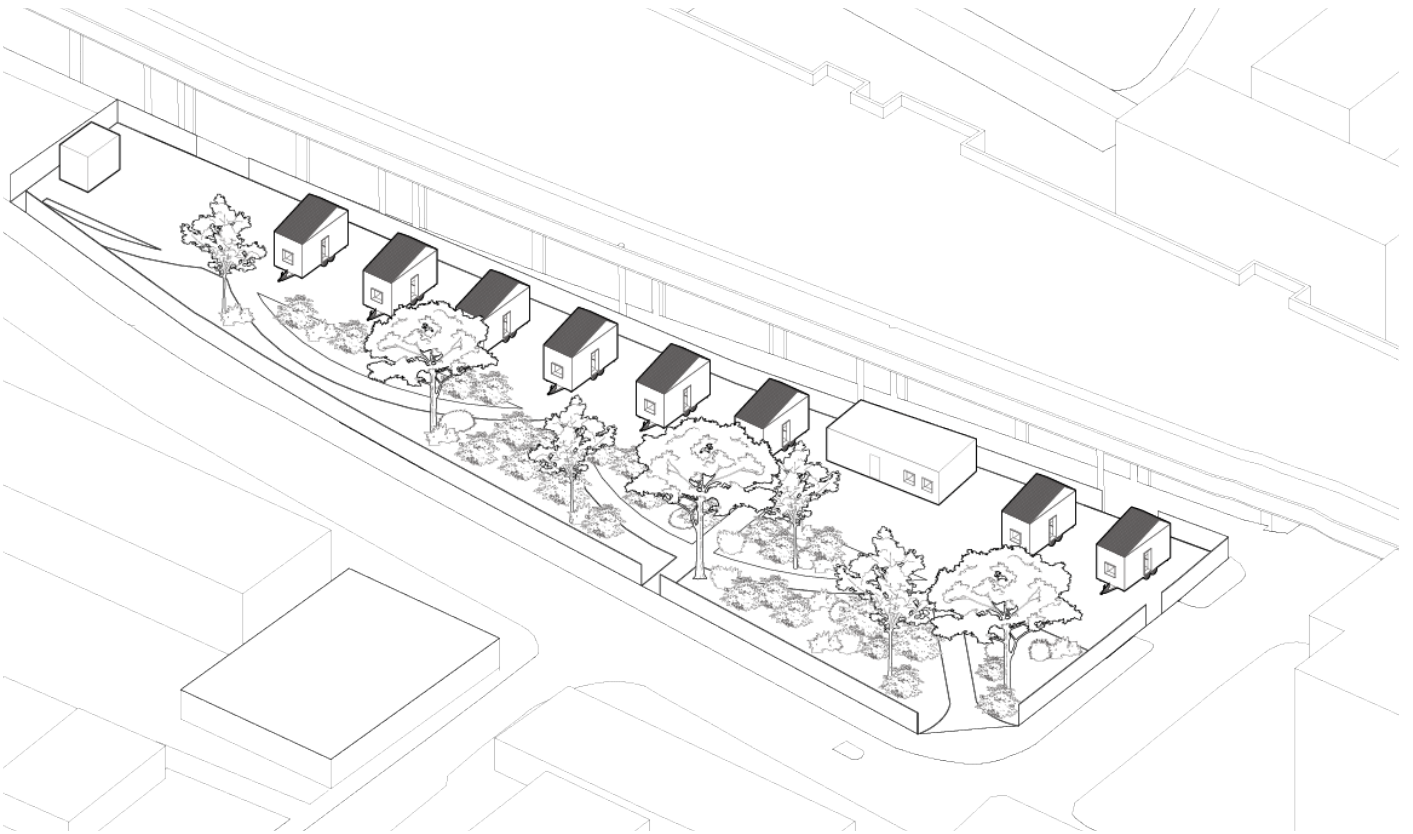
A response to our changing world: from remote working; to minimalist ideals; to changes in how we relate and need spaces in cities and at home... some say tiny is the future of living.



Top image: Unwind Cabin. From left to right: Tilba Lake House, Eurodita, Svtanok tiny house



concept overview



THE TINY VILLAGE

Homefolk's concept brings together a small village of around 8 tinyhomes in addition to communal facilities. As well as creating a close-knit community, this should have a lower environmental impact than a standard residential home.

The concept of a tinyhome village has many successful precedents, but it has never before been done in a dense city, such as London.

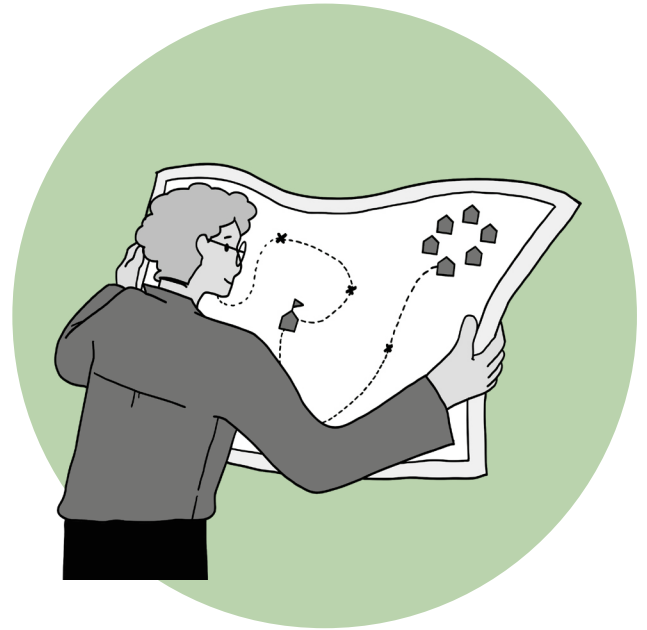


site selection process

TO SELECT A SITE

A unique feature for a tinyhome village is that they can address difficult sites by being small and adaptable. Their light touch to the ground and lack of foundations mean they can inhabit paved sites with no interventions needed. This creates lots of potential for the villages to activate an untapped market of underused greyfield sites.

It is important that the sites can grow from established communities, in order to create a support network for the tinyhome residents.



CASE STUDY Tower Hamlets



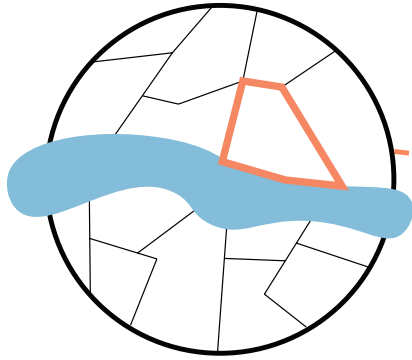
Key

- - Community Centre
- - Potential Site

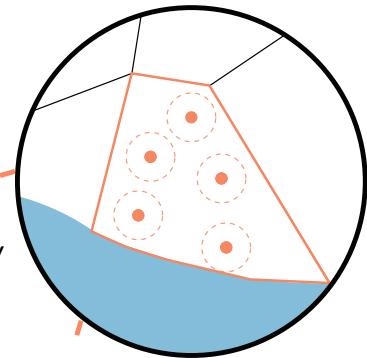


site selection process

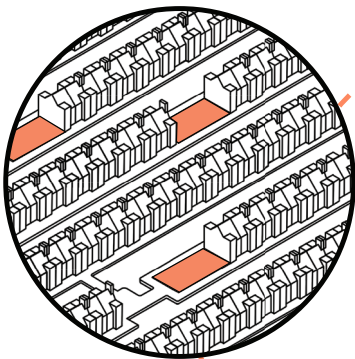
PROPOSED PROCESS



1. Choose a an area or borough to invesigate



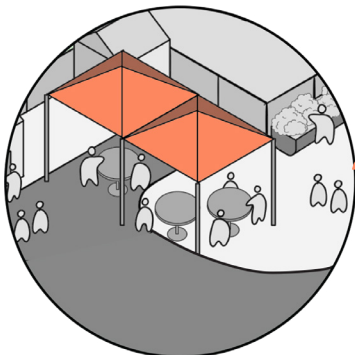
2. Reach out to established community groups in the local area



3. Locate viable underused sites



4. Evaluate site noise, air quality, light and access



5. Begin community engagement workshops

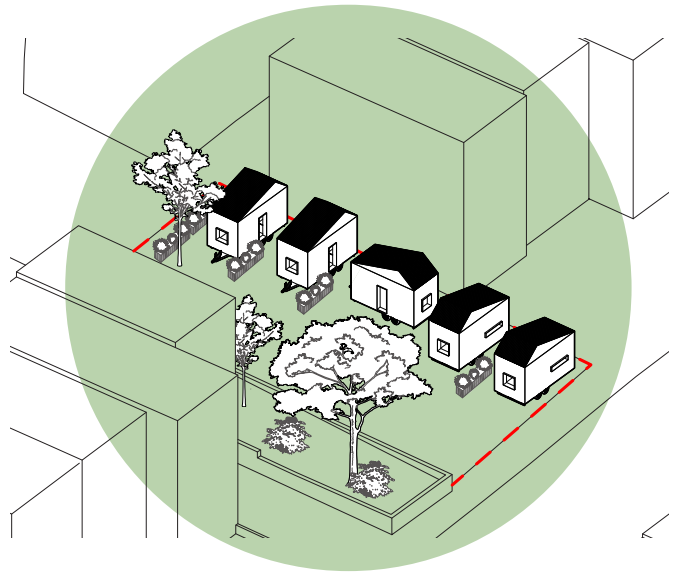


village arrangement

CASE STUDIES

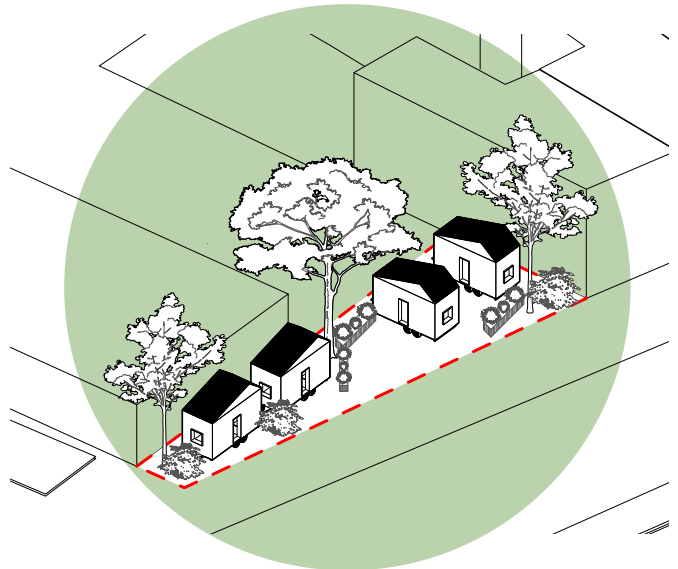
Celtic Street

A large inefficient use of space identified is this entrance to a park. Creating a pleasant through-route in between a tiny village development is different example of how a smaller scale development could look.



Bancroft Street

This is an example of a difficult site. Here we have a lot of unused paved space with 3 prominent trees that wouldn't be suitable for a normal development. However, on the right you can see an arrangement of 3 tinyhomes and communal pod that would connect 2 rows of terraced housing.



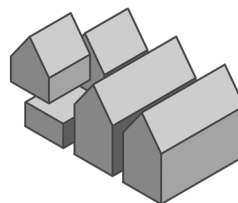
APPROACH TO VILLAGE ARRANGEMENT



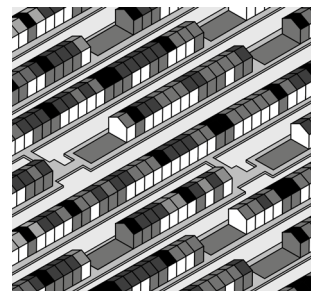
Minimise walking distance to shared facilities



Integrate planters into pod arrangements



Allow for manoeuvrability to drive pods onto site

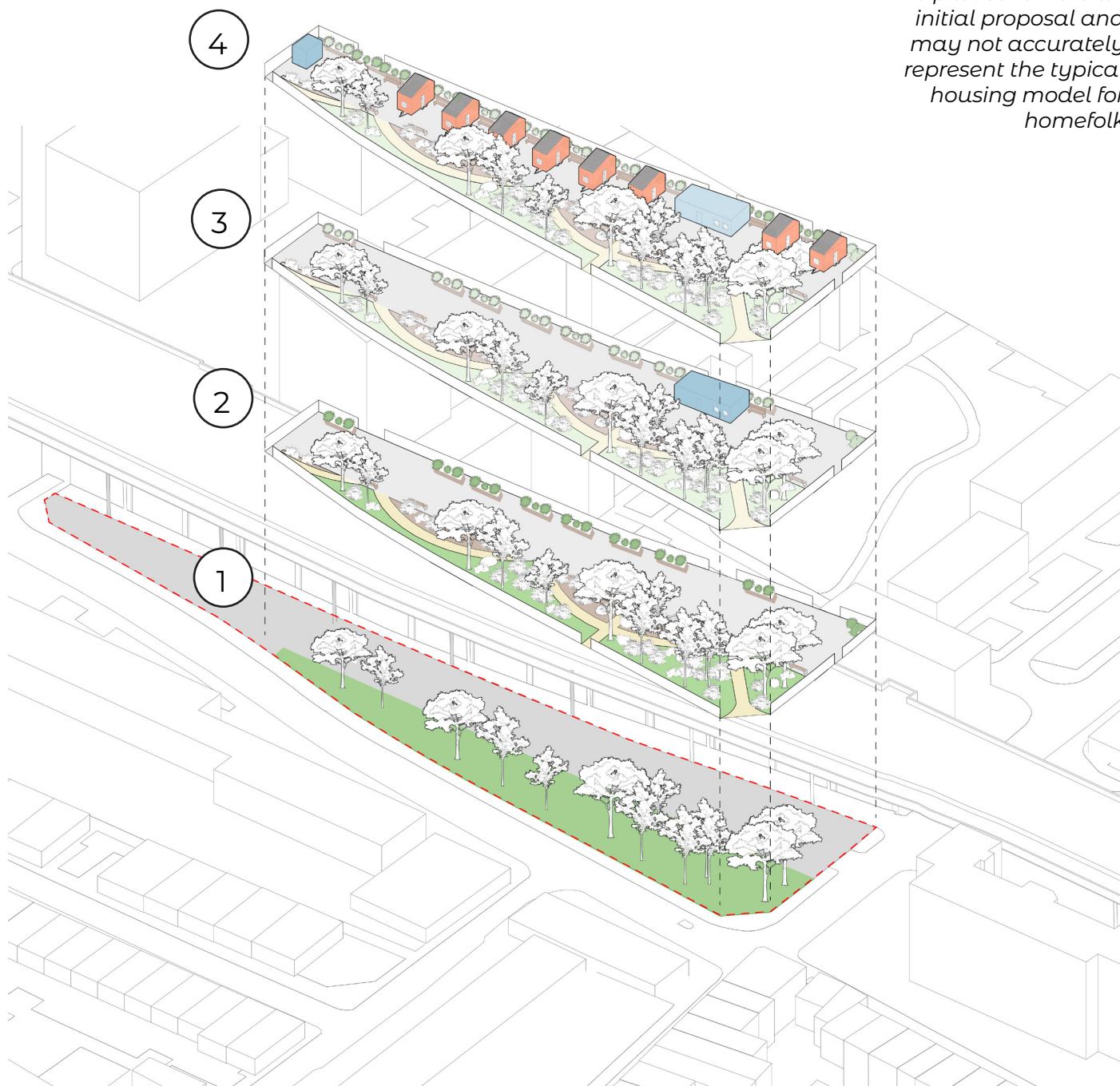


Consider arrangement against existing buildings



pilot village development

The pilot scheme is an initial proposal and may not accurately represent the typical housing model for homefolk



1

select site

Using the site selection process, identify a suitable site, use the following steps alongside the community engagement tools.

2

site greening

Add gates and site openings. Add allotments, raised planters, benches and seating.

3

engage community

Connect water and electricity to the site. Bring in the communal toilets, shower, kitchen and laundry pods.

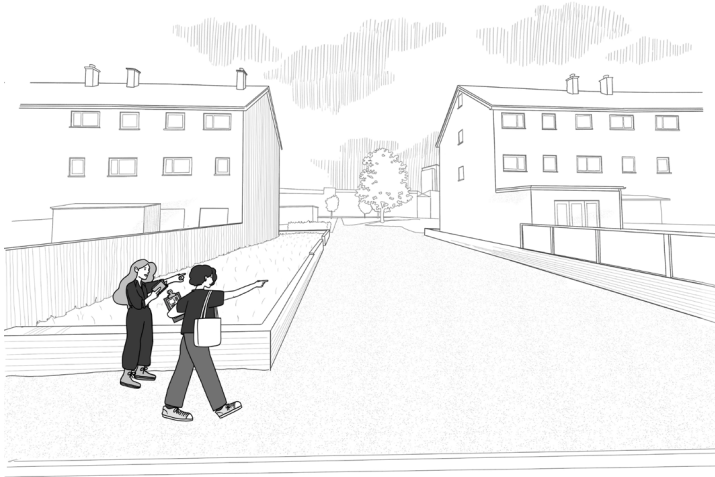
4

bring in tinyhomes

Bring the main pods onto the site and let the residents settle. Make adjustments according to their needs, such as adding more planters, or accessibility ramps.



1. SITE IDENTIFICATION



Taking interested parties, local and potential residents on a walking tour to identify and discuss sites will help start the conversation about the development of a tiny village.

2. SITE GREENING



Once the site has been identified, steps can be implemented to green and improve the area. Through planters, allotments, artwork etc. the scheme encourages the involvement of the local community in regenerating their area.

3. PODS



Once the grey paved site has been transformed, the next steps would be bringing the homes onto the site for residents to move into the area, completing the final stage of the village.

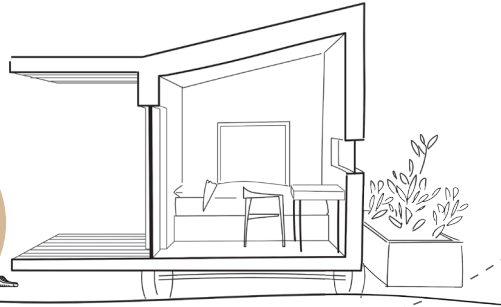


day in the life



06:00

Proposed users at this stage of homefolk's vision are students and young professionals.



10:00

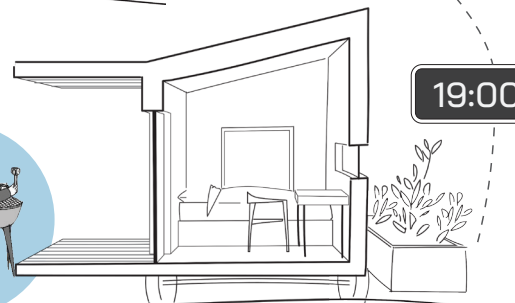
A flexible structure of how their day could flow demonstrates a variety of uses within the space. Uses include for work, sleep and leisure.



12:00

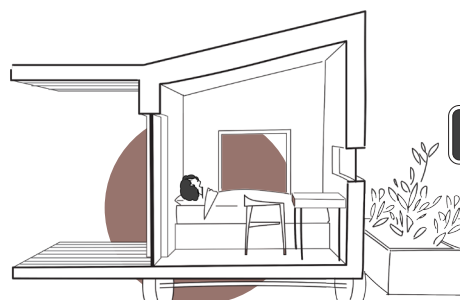


15:00



19:00

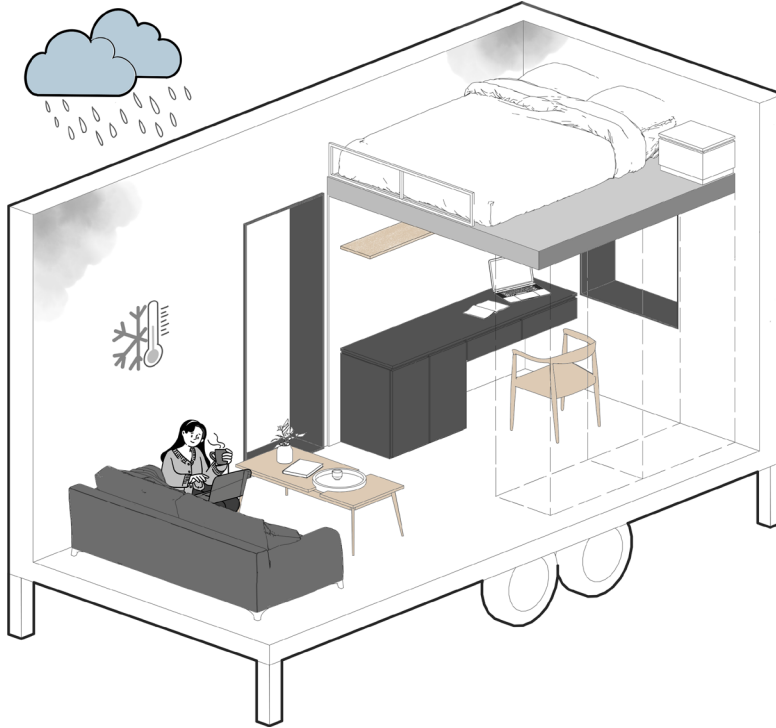
Our pod proposes flexible uses for the space, including covered external spaces, connecting the resident to the outdoors.



21:00



CONCERNS



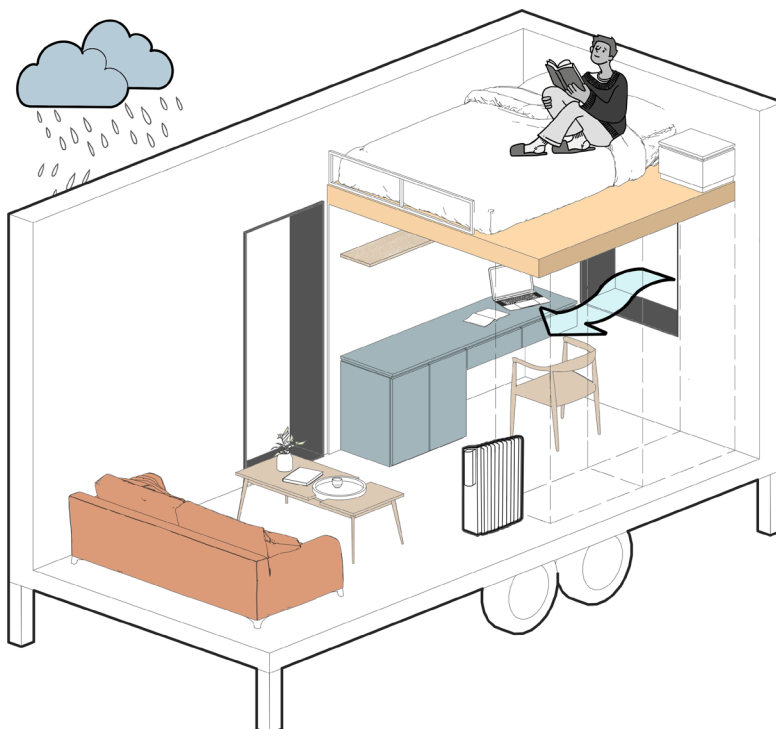
Climatic

- More exposed in severe weather conditions than actual houses
- Exposure to hazardous construction materials
- Exposure to heat flux, external temperature
- Severe weather conditions
- Poor indoor air quality
- Respiratory effects of damp and mould

Fire

- Internal & external fire spread
- Inappropriate material use which lack of ability preventing fires
- Linings & structure
- Faulty wiring

MITIGATION



Material

- Ensure proper material use which ensure the structural safety and stability of tinyhomes
- Ensure non-toxic insulation for environmental safety
- Ensure all specified materials use

Weight distribution

Pay attention on weight distribution within the tiny house, especially for tiny houses on wheels

Air Quality

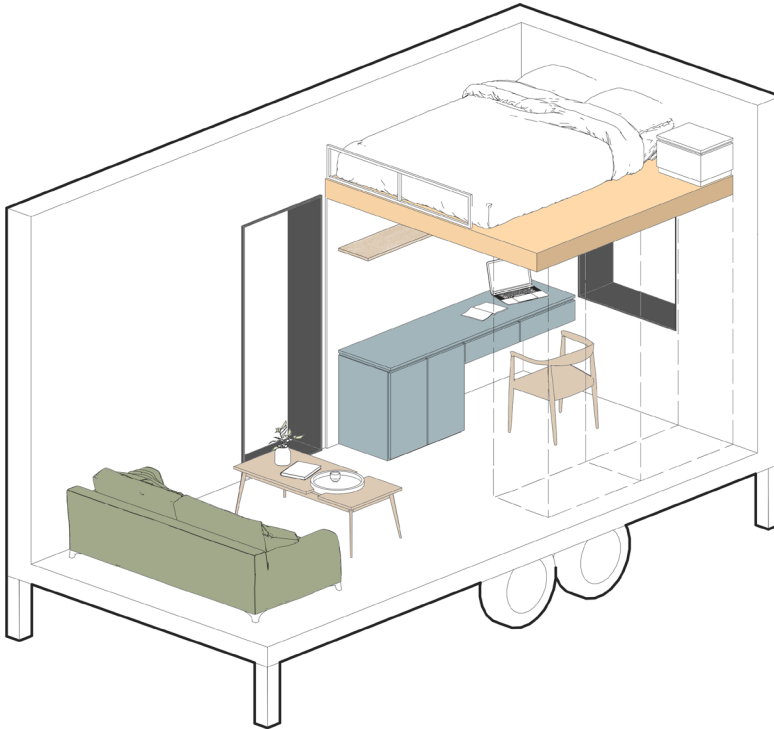
Opposing windows and orientation towards average wind direction, ensures passive ventilation

Internal fire

- Smoke detectors & fire alarms installation (should connect to a central monitoring point or alarm receiving centre)
- Pay attention on heating options for small spaces
- Fire resisting door should be provided
- Ensure fire resisting material use for the pods



SECURITY



Concerns

- Burglary or break-ins
- Local crime rates

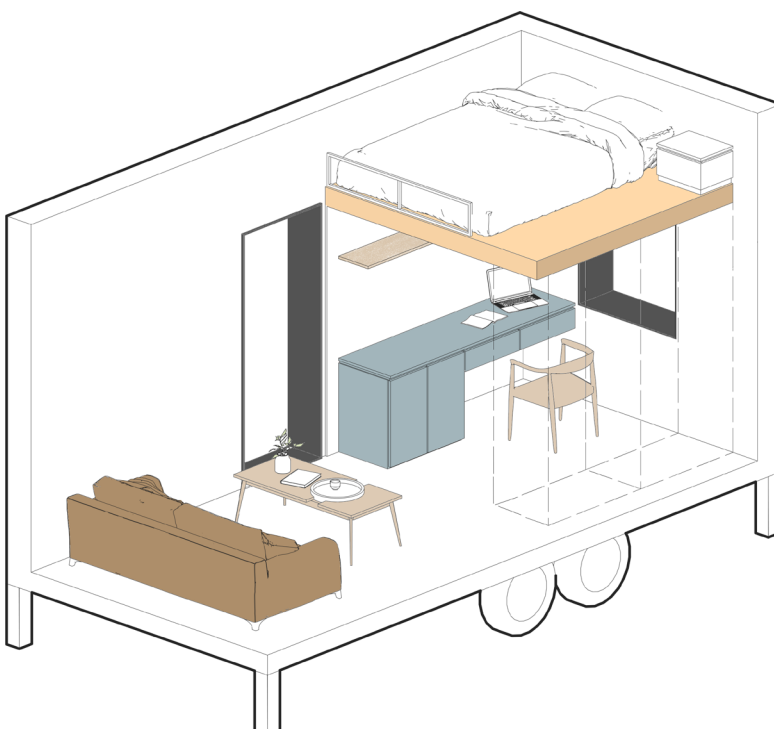
Mitigation

- Invest decent security system in terms of safety of the tiny village
- Security cameras installation
- Fence around the whole tiny village
- Foundation Anchoring (for tiny houses on wheels)

Evacuation

- Evacuation plan & clear escape route in case of emergencies
- Emergency escape window
- Fire extinguisher
- Access and facilities for the fire service

ACCESSIBILITY



Requirements

- Doors' size at least 90 x 205 cm for accessibility
- Height of operating elements such as light switches should be at 80 cm high, but no more than 110 cm
- Sanitary room in communal area (bathroom with toilet, washbasin and floor-level shower: min. 180 x 165 cm)

Considerations for mobility

- Railings and Grab Bars
- Accessible bathroom fixtures

Considerations for impaired mobility:

- Sufficiently large areas to allow comfortable ergonomic movement
- Ramp installation with a gentle - slope (maximum incline of 6%)
- wider doorways

Bedroom Storage

- Double bed and side cabinet
- A storage space of at least 1.2 cubic meters per resident



COMMUNAL SPACE



Living area

- Eating area should be provided (for 2 people)
- Seating area should be provided (at least an armchair)
- A kitchenette for residents to prepare convenience food

LSPBSL London Plan Guidance, 2024



Internal community amenity space

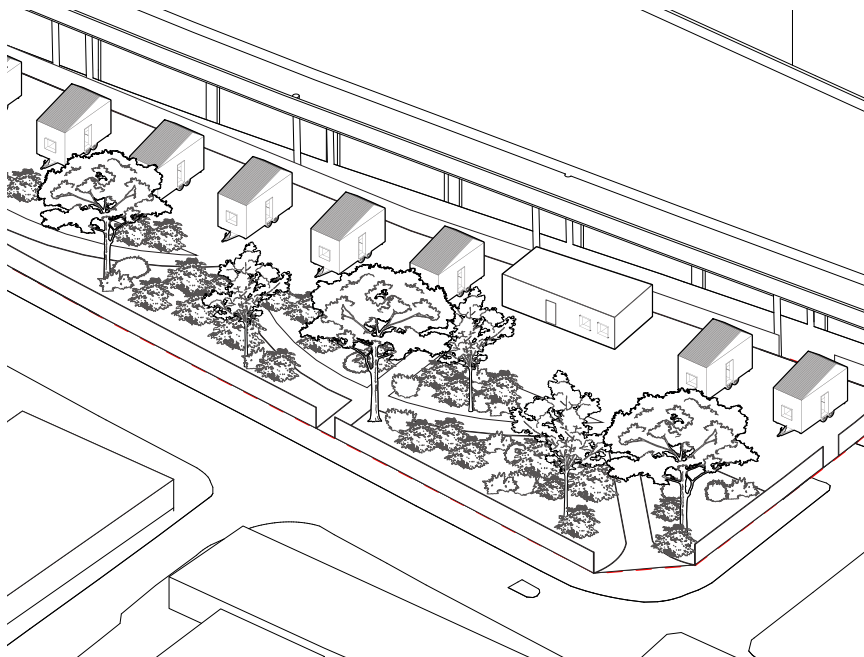
Required: 32sqm Achieved: 32.5sqm

External community amenity space

Required: 8sqm Pilot: 600+sqm

This area will vary site-to-site, but should always well exceed the minimum standards

EXTERNAL COMMUNAL SPACE



General

- External communal space should provide both wellbeing, urban greening and biodiversity
- External communal space should be designed to encourage residents to spend time
- External communal space should be accessible to all residents (including less-abled people)
- Seating area and lighting should be provided, ensure a good-quality and relaxing environment
- Communal laundry facilities should be provided

(LSPBSL London Plan Guidance, 2024)



COMMUNAL KITCHEN



Dining area

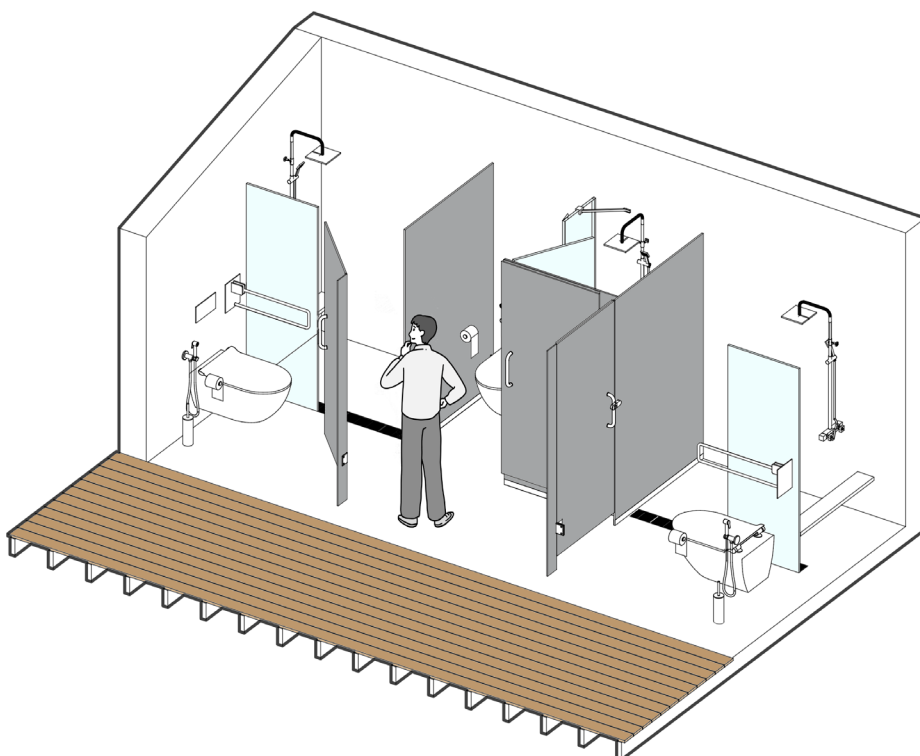
- Dining area should be included within the communal kitchen
- Dining table, chairs and proper circulation should be provided
- circulation for people with disabilities should be included
- Two dining spaces per cooking station

Cooking area

- 0.5 sqm per resident, to include one cooking station per 15 residents
- One hob and oven; sink and draining board per 15 residents

(LSPBSL London Plan Guidance, 2024)

COMMUNAL TOILET



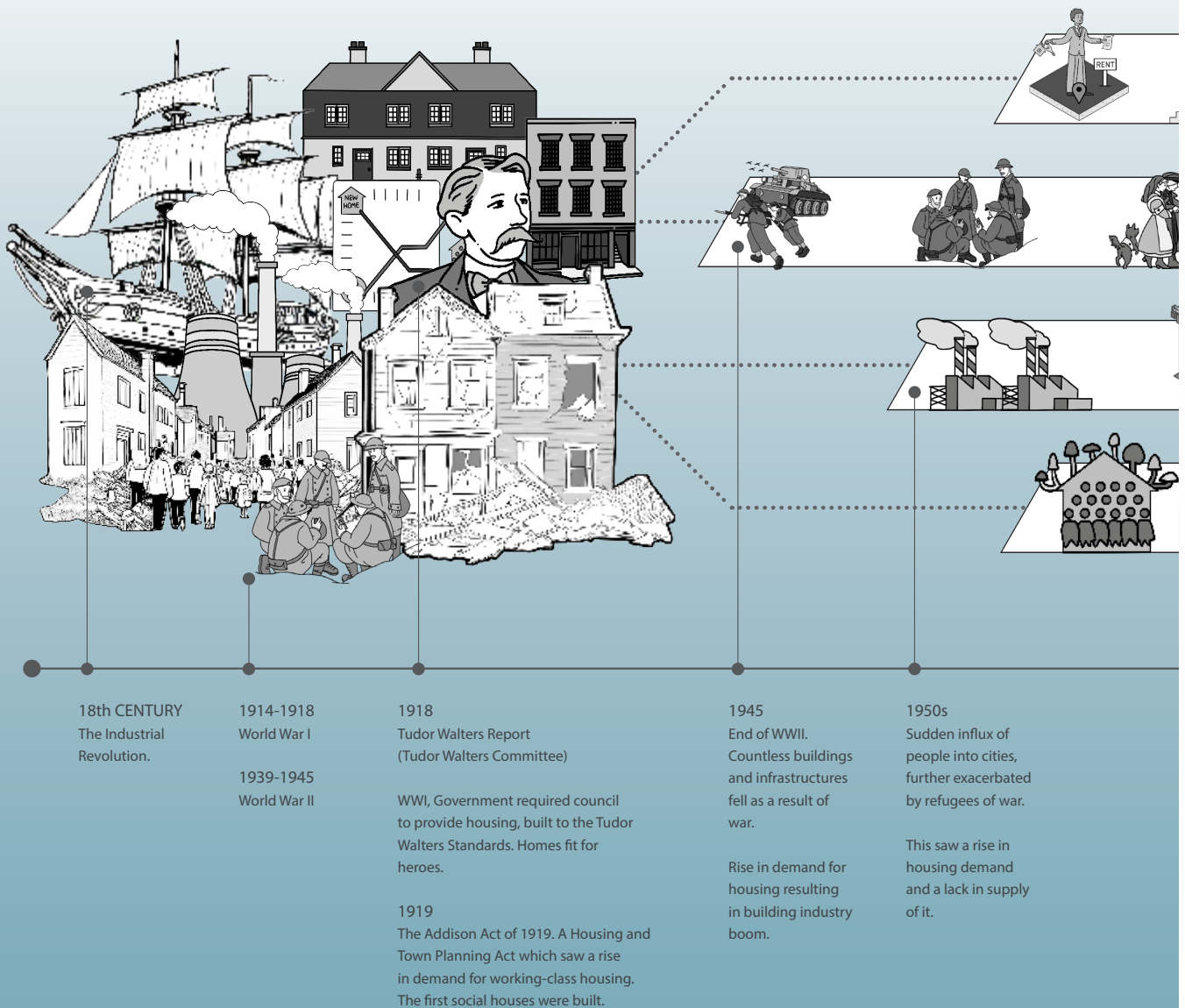
Water supply

Filters, purification systems, and regular testing ensure that water supplies remain safe for consumption & wastewater treatment

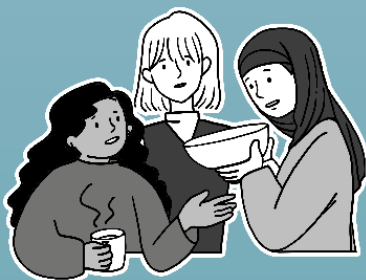
Communal toilet

- Toilets designed for people with disabilities should be provided
- Communal toilet should be provided near communal spaces, such that people can access to the toilet while they are away from their pods

(LSPBSL London Plan Guidance, 2024)



Pilot Process

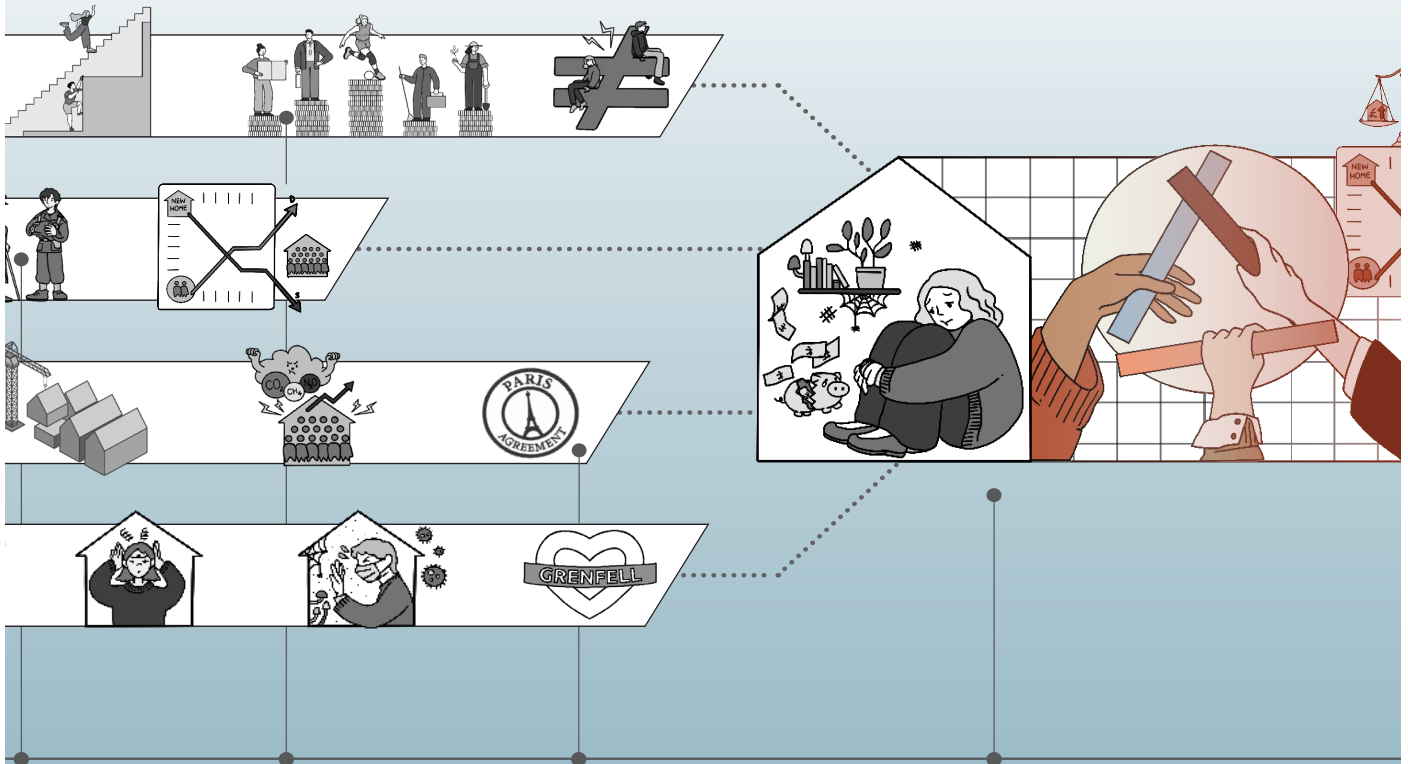


1. Community Engagement

To understand how receptive the general public is to the idea of living in a tiny village. Part of the proposed pilot process includes running an engagement workshop with the general public in the Tower Hamlets area to gather data, generate discourse and research local opinions on tiny home communal living. Doing so will inform the conceptual design, and address any prevalent issues regarding communal living and inherent problems within the site.



timeline



1950 - 2000
Demand of housing had to be quickly met, and many housing development were quickly built to accomodate.

Due to rushed and unregulated construction, these houses are unfit for habitation.

1980s
Right to Buy Scheme Initiated.

2000s
Land ownership in the past and generational wealth created an economical divide between general public and wealthy few.

Privatised land resulted in high rental cost, affecting housing affordability for low-income households.

Poor housing conditions and post war economy provided an impetus leading to poor physical & mental health.

2010s
Underlying health issues stemmed from poor housing conditions, causing lower quality of life further exacerbated by the Covid-19 Pandemic. Poor economical activity resulted in rising cost of living, including home ownership.

2016
The Paris Agreement

2017
Grenfell Tragedy

2018
Building Regulations Amendment

2021
Fire Safety Act

2018
Community Led Housing (CLH) organisation established.

2019
Many families are struggling, low income households are most susceptible to living in poor housing conditions, affecting health and overall mental and economical stability.

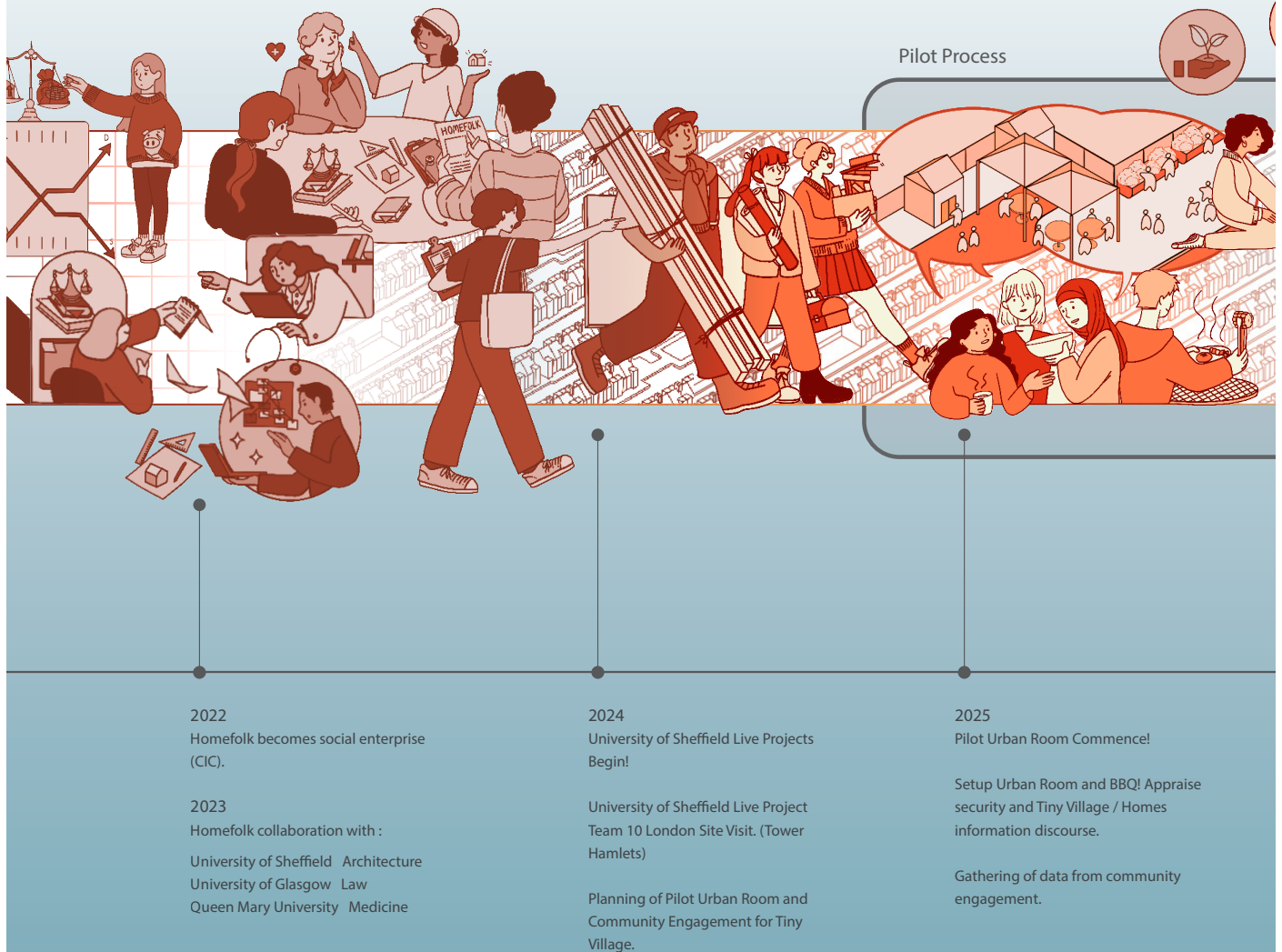
2021
With much housing crises prevalent in today's urban world. Like minded people have come together to form Homefolk, an organisation created to tackle the housing issue in London.



2. Data Gathering

The community engagement will gather all necessary data regarding concerns of living in a tiny home, preliminary conceptual designs and tiny village masterplans. Data research will question the factors that make tiny home living a welcoming idea, the various aspects and concerns of communal lifestyle and address any stigma surrounding tiny home communal living. This data will then be utilised as part of the pilot proposal to the local council.





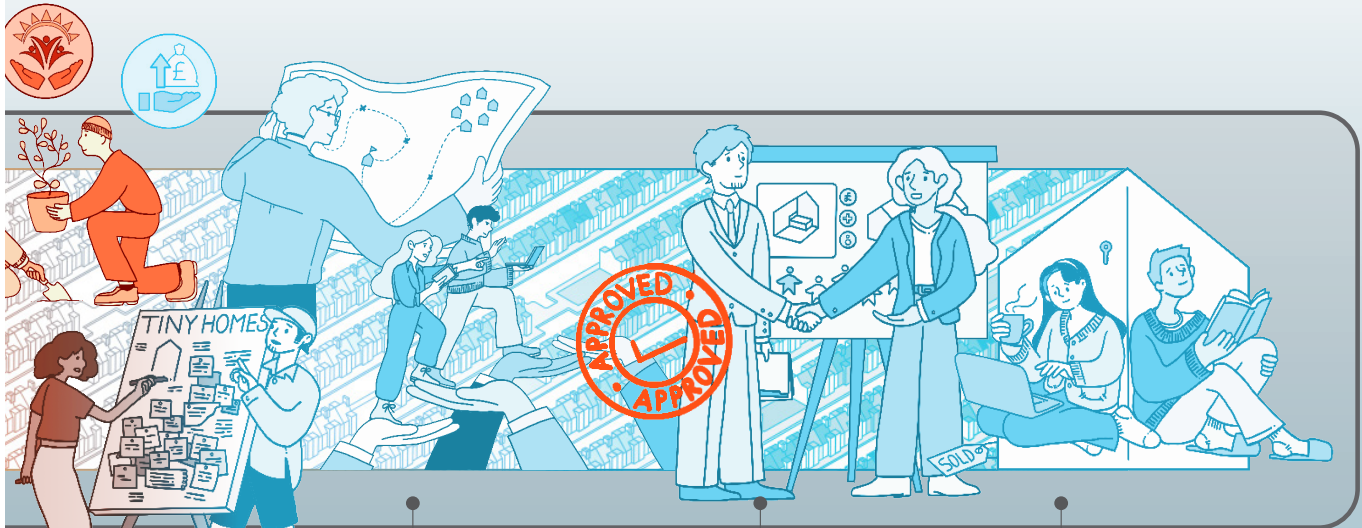
3. Site Selection

Data regarding chosen sites will have to be gathered to identify the various topological aspects any terrain will need to sustain a tiny village. Security and amenities that allow the community to generate funds are essential and site properties will determine the attainability of such facilities. A list of criteria that identifies these factors is created to help expedite the process of site selection.



5. Greening of the Chosen Site

After an appropriate site has been chosen, a process of greening of the site should occur. Doing this will encourage the formation of a local identity and forge communal bonds. After prevalent greening, a microclimate can be created, leading to an increasingly desirable and pleasant space to inhabit in. The greening process will be a community led activity, which will lead to further community-driven initiatives.



2026
Planning for Tiny Village
Pilot for Council Approval.

2027
Council Approved. Procurement of
funding from investors.

2028
Begin construction of Tiny
Village.

2030
Tiny Village built and
residents moved in.

Tender Tiny Village Pilot for
construction.

Begin first phase construction of
Tiny Village Pilot.

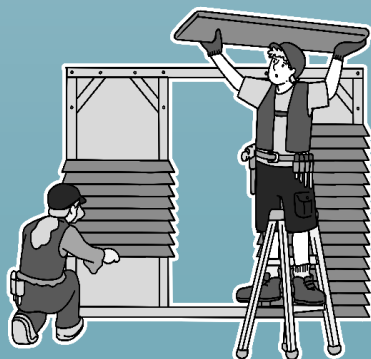
Organise community events
(e.g Greening the Site) to foster
community relations.

Construct community-driven
facilities.

Build Tiny Homes and
communal facilities.

Residents can save
more income because
of Homefolk's affordable
housing, and are protected
from no fault evictions or
surprise rent hikes.

The Tiny Village residents can
share resources and work
together in their unique co-
housing community.



6. Community-Driven Facilities

Creating spaces that provide services and amenities such as workshops and seminars will help foster community relationships. Taking a page out of Stepney City Farm in Hackney, any commune of tiny home will benefit from facilities that provide its residents a platform to connect with one another and learn new skills together. Fostering strong communal bonds is important in maintaining the longevity, and hence sustainability, in any given community.



community engagement

WORKSHOPS

Integrated throughout the design process, there will be public work shops held to understand public opinion, explain the concepts of the tiny village, and create opportunities for them to influence the design.



Workshop 1: walking tour

The walking tour encourages participants to engage with potential sites for homefolk's pilot. it allows them to question what they want in a home for their community and what a suitable site therefore entails.



Outcomes:

- Create valuable discussion between future neighbours concerning what a tinyhome community needs from its locality
- Narrow down potential pilot sites based off of the feedback from participants
- Collate a database of viable sites for future projects



community engagement

Workshop 2: tinyhome design

The design workshop uses interactive models to encourage potential residents to question 'what is important to me in a home?' and 'could i see myself living here?' it also invites local residents to understand an alternative way of living.



Outcomes:

- Form relationships between potential residents and the local community
- Create a database of engagement events.
- Feedback on the design of the tinyhomes should be logged and it should be considered how this influences the design of the tinyhomes

Workshop 3: tiny village design

The tiny village design exercise is a flexible activity that allows participants to experiment with different site configurations. it provides an opportunity to test what they need in a community and what their home environs should be like.



Outcomes:

- Develop a co-designed masterplan of the site
- Establish a network within the future community
- Foster a collaborative mindset between future neighbours
- Form an understanding of residents' desires for their community to refine future site criteria



outreach

We don't work in competition with other groups and hope to work together. We want to do something for the local area and make sure that people who need homes, get homes.

It's so great to hear that another group is starting such an exciting initiative centred around collaboration and community!



**Exeter Tiny Home Community
Director**
Sue Clarke

Living in a skip is a response to the frustration that the majority of my income went straight to rent, limiting the possibility of saving.

I find it comfortable, but it's not for everyone.



**Skip House Resident /
Architectural Designer**
Harrison Marshall

The best thing about living in a van is the ability to travel and mobility in and around Australia, flexible way of living can park up at a beach and enjoy the elements, be able to go surfing etc.

The main challenge is strict with amount of belongings. Also, limited access to electricity for using phone / laptop.



Canal Boat Resident
Richard Golland

The best thing about living on a boat is having my own space, and the helpful community that came with it. There were already people living in canal boats around that same area.

The main challenge is the limited access to electricity, access to convenient groceries, and access to healthcare services



**Van Resident /
Interior Designer**
Peter Price



common questions

FAQ



What if I want a toilet in my pod?

The pods are designed to be adaptable, with storage space that could function as a space for a compostable toilet.

How would you combat smell in a small space?

Effective ventilation is a consideration within the design that will address this, good airflow can help keep smells from lingering as well as the selection of materials that resist odour. Houseplants are natural air purifiers and regularly cleaning surfaces will also help.



How would the pod withstand extreme weathers?

Using agile home's housing model, the pod would be built using super-insulated, airtight construction that minimises energy consumption. The home will be warm in winter, cool in summer and condensation free.

What maintenance and waste management will there be for the site?

A dedicated space will be provided for bin collection, and residents will be provided with the skills to maintain and manage the village.



How to feel secure and safe within the tiny village?

The arrangement of the village will aim to minimise uncomfortable spaces, these sites will be enclosed for additional security as well as providing plenty of lighting.

Would this be suitable for wheelchair users?

The initial pilot scheme proposal won't be suitable for wheelchair users due to limitations. However accessibility will be paramount within the design of the model.





ownership models

Homefolk will have a bespoke and layered ownership model to ensure ownership security for its residents, and continued affordability for generations to come. It will layer CLT, COOP and CIC models, as advocated by former UN special rapporteur on the adequate housing crisis, Professor Raquel Rolnik (architect and urban planner)



TYPES OF AFFORDABLE OWNERSHIP MODEL

Community Land Trust (CLT)

A CLT separates ownership of the land from the building, in which the tenant only pays for the building and not the land of which it is built on. This will create affordability for low-income residents.

Cooperative (COOP)

Each resident in an ownership cooperative is a shareholder in the cooperative corporation, and in exchange for their shares, they are granted exclusive use of a specific housing unit. However, they do not own the unit itself, but rather, the right to live there as long as they hold their shares.

Community Interest Company (CIC)

A CIC is a limited company that prioritises community benefits rather than profit. Example of a CIC would be an activity that generates profits, which are then used to benefit the community the CIC is supporting. CICs are established as a brand of company that the public recognises and trusts, with a social purpose that is easily understood.





ownership models

Affordable housing developments have utilised **Community Led Housing models (CLH)** to create a sustainable and supportive community for low-income households and we have drawn our bespoke ownership model from these.



ST CLEMENTS

St Clements, Mile End, Tower Hamlets

“Our flagship project with 23 homes was London’s first ever CLT site, by and for local people in Tower Hamlets. It has set the standard for genuinely affordable homes for local residents.

St. Clements is a historic Grade 2 listed site that in a past life was a famous psychiatric hospital, and sits next to the Tower Hamlets Cemetery Park, an important hub for nature and community. The project provided 252 new homes, 35% of which are genuinely affordable homes including 58 for ‘social rent’ and 23 CLT homes.”



LILAC

Low Impact Living Affordable Community

Lilac is a co-housing community consisting 20 units of eco-build homes made using a low carbon method of construction, utilising timber panels and straw bales. The Lilac development adopts a Mutual Home Ownership



model (MHO), creating a collaborative community. “The common house is at the heart of the community, and includes communal cooking and eating facilities, laundry facilities, meeting space, play area, office and guest rooms.”

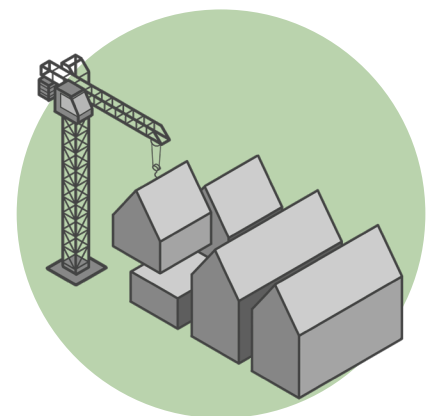


MODEL STREET SCENE



CAR-FREE POSSIBILITIES

City paved and road areas, as percentages of total surface, vary with shifts in transport trends (such as reduced private car use), potentially creating a changing relationship with better climate goals and public needs. Similar to how canals' transformation from industrial infrastructure to leisure and housing space, as an exciting new type of space across urban spaces.



In recent years, private car use in London has been steadily declining, creating an exciting opportunity to rethink our relationship with the city's streets and public spaces. This shift away from car dependency opens the door to transforming urban areas with more greenery, expanded cycling infrastructure, and safer pedestrian zones. By reimagining how we use our streets, we can foster a more sustainable, accessible, and vibrant urban environment for everyone.

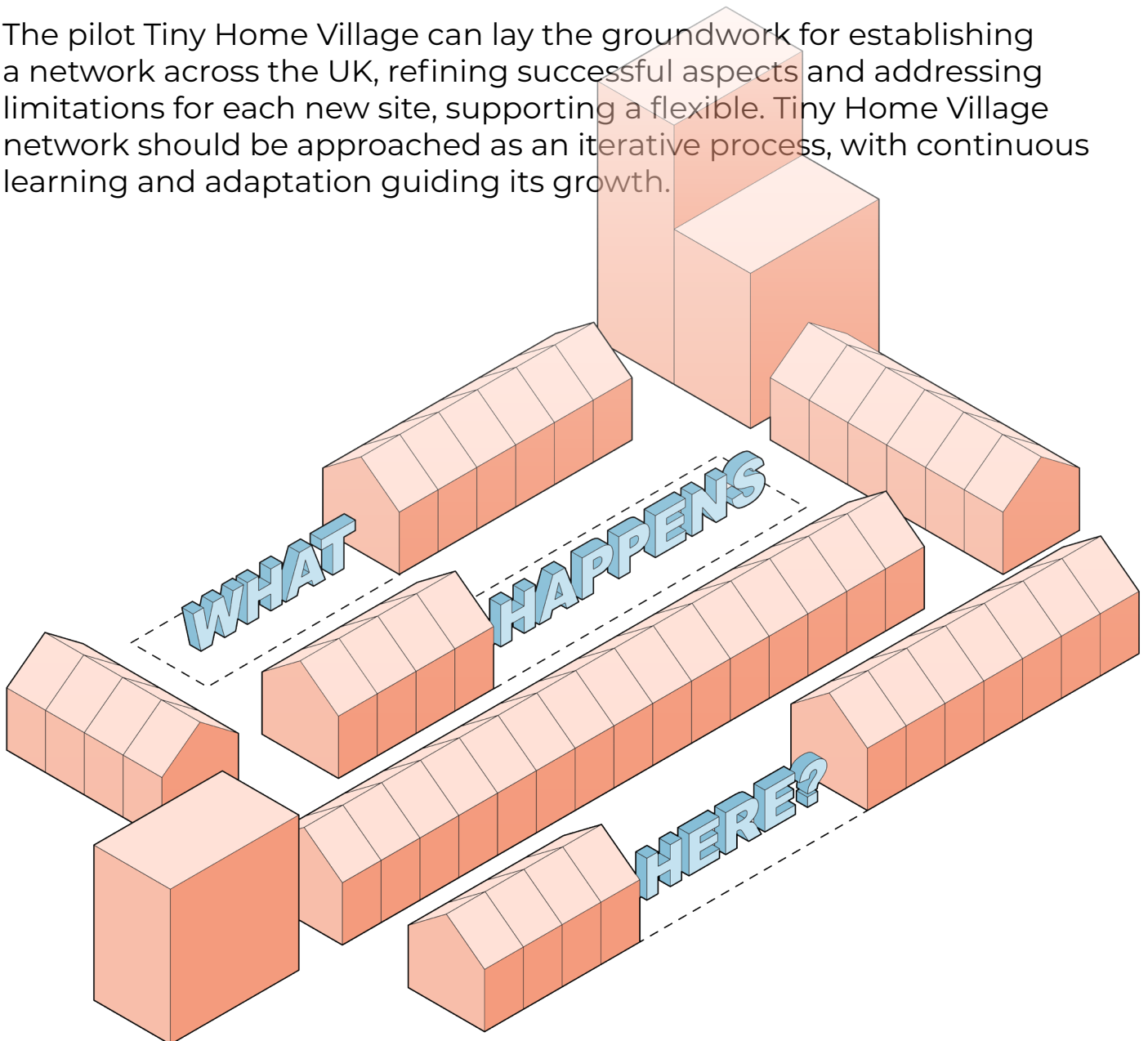


conclusion

We believe that we offer a valuable alternative to traditionally built houses, addressing uncertainties posed by climate change and the affordability crisis, particularly in London. This scheme aims to revitalize underused and abandoned greyfield sites, bringing value and care back to these spaces. The tinyhome village proposes a quick and sustainable solution as well as promoting the benefits of co-living.

This concept remains in its early stages of development and is still undergoing refinement. With further development, it could introduce innovative solutions to address existing issues within the housing sector, offering a fresh perspective on sustainable, accessible, and efficient housing solutions.

The pilot Tiny Home Village can lay the groundwork for establishing a network across the UK, refining successful aspects and addressing limitations for each new site, supporting a flexible. Tiny Home Village network should be approached as an iterative process, with continuous learning and adaptation guiding its growth.





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