



GŴYR COMMUNITY LAND TRUST

MEMBERSHIP CRITERIA AND JOINING PROCESS

Gwyr CLT is extremely excited to welcome new members to the group. We want the process of applying to be fair, transparent, and accessible for people. The process is in line with our manifesto which reflects the community we wish to create.

Housing Allocation:

At the pre-build stage of the project, we are aiming to have up to 6 households (we are currently 4), a household could be an individual, couple or a family and will have the skills and commitment to actively move the project forward to the build phase. We will recruit 6 new households at the build phase of the project.

1. Membership criteria

We are currently in the developmental stage of the project, at this stage (2022-2024) GCLT is looking for adults with time and skills to contribute to the developmental process and going forward the build stage. The successful applicant(s) will be able to contribute a minimum of 4-6 hours per week at the development stage and 30 hours per week (per household) during the build stage. At this stage skills that would be particularly useful are accountancy, law, housing policy, communications, knowledge of construction, design and project management, but we recognise that skills and assets come in many different forms and welcome all applications. Successful applicants will have at least 4-6 hours a week to contribute to the development process and a desire to via co-housing principles.

- New members must be willing to agree to our manifesto, which includes agreements on how we live, our aims and values. (This is a working document and will evolve over time.)
- All members and provisional members are subject to the decision making, conflict resolution process (currently being developed using sociocracy principles) and dismissal procedures before and after the build.
- Members can move to make changes to the manifesto but only after 6 months of joining the project.
- We agree to abide by cooperative principles (e.g. one person one vote), listed below.
- To buy or rent a house people must become a member of the cooperative/CLT.
- Members must be in need of affordable housing (as defined by Swansea Council - see below).
- New partners or family members joining households who are already members must commit to the membership criteria (i.e. selling a house if they currently own one).

Membership Expectations:

- During the pre-build stage one person from each household must become a member of a planning group, attending fortnightly meetings (Wednesdays 5.30-7.30) and take on an active role in developing the project through team work and ideas development (minimum 4-6 hours)
- Attend the monthly membership meetings (Third Monday of the month 5.30-7.30), and quarterly two day visioning meetings and take an active role by facilitating, taking minutes and creating break out groups when needed.
- Want to live by Co-housing principles.
- After the build phase attend a monthly half day workday meeting and social and actively participate by cooking dinner, gardening or helping to organise.
- Commit to the purpose and values of the project.
- Support, practice and develop the decision making & conflict resolution culture we are trying to create.
- Members must make every effort to attend meetings regularly. If a meeting is missed with no apologies someone from the group will call to check in and then if 3 meetings in a row are missed (even with apologies) a discussion will happen between members to decide whether or not to ask that person to step back and make room for a new member with more ability and interest in committing. The group understands that personal circumstances may result in less participation and that is absolutely fine (and will not be penalised) but any personal circumstances hindering participation should be shared with the members. This criteria aims to ensure that everyone is working with similar energies towards the goal of the cohousing being realised/flourishing.

Managing the recruitment process:

Any full member can take on the job of overseeing the membership process. We will allocate a membership lead to assist in the smooth and consistent running of the application process. This will include corresponding with applicants, circulating

applications to members or those who have been nominated to the decision-making panel and organising days for members to meet potential new members.

2. Joining process:

GCLT aims to let people know about the opportunities to join the project as widely as possible. We will advertise locally via established groups and networks as well as on local social media pages, through our monthly newsletter and on our website. We will explain our application process and make deadlines clear.

Registering interest in GCLT:

- As and when people find out about our project they can express interest by emailing gowerlandtrust@gmail.com Their names will be kept on the interest list and they will be contacted and updated via email with updates on the project and openings for new members.
- If the list becomes more than 20 families we will close the list and invite interested people to join our friends and supporters list where we will in future advertise any openings in the membership. We will contact those on the list yearly to check their position, making sure the list is updated and new people are able to join.
- Everyone on the list will be notified when the membership application process opens and given time to apply.

Application for membership:

- To apply you must answer the application form questions. You can apply using other media (voice/ video) if written forms aren't your thing. We will acknowledge applications and at each stage we will tell applicants how soon to expect a decision.
- We may phone or email applicants for more information, please let us know how you wish to be contacted.
- Applications will be read in advance and discussed with all members at a members meeting and will be decided based on the membership criteria

Membership process:

- Send in applications
- Shortlisting *
- A friendly initial interview
- Notification of provisional membership or unsuccessful applications via email.
- Provisional member(s) to participate in a meeting and one day of visioning weekend or other task.
- 3 month review and invitation to continue the process or not.
- 6 month review and invitation to formally join the co-op or not
- All decisions about potential new members will be made with all Gwyr CLT members present and based on membership criteria

*Shortlisting will be done based on the following membership criteria:

- The applicant's housing need (according to Swansea Council's Housing Need Criteria, see below)
- People wanting to live via Co-housing principles
- Skills and time to contribute to the project
- How much we think we'll get on with each other
- Our commitment to being representative of the area we live and work in.

Provisional Membership:

- The number of provisional members will be limited by our capacity to induct new members and limited to a maximum of 6 households during the pre-build phase.
- Provisional new members will be assigned a buddy who is not their close friend or connection to the group. The buddy will be available to answer questions and support the applicant through the process.
- If there is feedback or issues between members and provisional members in either direction this will be facilitated through the buddy. A provisional member can request a new buddy if they feel someone else could better support them. See conflict resolution policy for how GCLT navigates conflict and disagreements.
- Legally, children under 16 cannot be voting members of the housing coop. If your family size changes between becoming a pre-built member and moving into the housing project, there would need to be a new discussion about the co-op's capacity to house your additional family members. If you already have plans to expand your family, please apply directly for your family's future intended size.

Expectations of provisional members:

By the 6 month review period, with buddy support:

- Have chaired or minuted a meeting, led on breakout groups and supported a piece of necessary work for the coop
- Attended two social events with the group
- Demonstrated that you share the core values of GCLT

3 and 6 month reviews:

- At the 3 month review date full members will reach group consent for one of the following options:
 - continue the membership process for a provisional member
 - call an end to the process
- At the 6 month review date full members will reach group consent for one of the following options:
 - invite the provisional member to formally join the co-op
 - extend the probationary period (continue as a provisional member)
 - call an end to the process

- On the rare occasion that there is an objection to an application, there will be a closed and supportive process for all parties, involving the person objecting to the applicant, the membership secretary and one other member.

Unsuccessful Applications:

- This will be done by phone or email. We don't give individual feedback unless requested.
- If requested, we will send feedback via email agreed by all members. This feedback will focus on shared reasons rather than individual feelings.

Leaving the Co-op:

- Any member of the co-op is free to leave at any time. They should communicate this through the member secretary with as much notice as possible.
- If a provisional member or full member is unresponsive for more than two months we will assume they have chosen to leave.

Dismissal from the Co-op:

People can be asked to leave the membership for the following reasons:

- Not participating in the life of the community (meetings, working groups, social events, build hours)
- Not contributing to the work they have agreed to
- Bullying, harassment, discrimination
- In the case where your circumstances mean you are no longer in housing need, during the development stages, may void your eligibility.

3. Cooperative Principles

These are the 7 cooperative principles which almost every co-op uses (since 1937). We can interpret them in our own ways but they are a good start.

1. Voluntary and Open Membership

Co-operatives are voluntary organisations, open to all persons able to use their services and willing to accept the responsibilities of membership, without gender, social, racial, political or religious discrimination.

2. Democratic Member Control

Co-operatives are democratic organisations controlled by their members, who actively participate in setting their policies and making decisions. Men and women serving as elected representatives are accountable to the membership. In primary co-operatives members have equal voting rights (one member, one vote) and co-operatives at other levels are also organised in a democratic manner.

3. Member Economic Participation

Members contribute equitably to, and democratically control, the capital of their co-operative. At least part of that capital is usually the common property of the co-operative. Members usually receive limited compensation, if any, on capital

subscribed as a condition of membership. Members allocate surpluses for any or all of the following purposes: developing their co-operative, possibly by setting up reserves, part of which at least would be indivisible; benefiting members in proportion to their transactions with the co-operative; and supporting other activities approved by the membership.

4. Autonomy and Independence

Co-operatives are autonomous, self-help organisations controlled by their members. If they enter into agreements with other organisations, including governments, or raise capital from external sources, they do so on terms that ensure democratic control by their members and maintain their co-operative autonomy.

5. Education, Training and Information

Co-operatives provide education and training for their members, elected representatives, managers, and employees so they can contribute effectively to the development of their cooperatives. They inform the general public - particularly young people and opinion leaders - about the nature and benefits of co-operation.

6. Co-operation among Co-operatives

Co-operatives serve their members most effectively and strengthen the co-operative movement by working together through local, national, regional and international structures.

7. Concern for Community

Co-operatives work for the sustainable development of their communities through policies approved by their members.

In need of affordable housing definition – Swansea Council

The following definitions apply:

'Person with a Local Connection' means an individual who before taking up occupation of the dwelling satisfies one of the following conditions:

(1) The person has been in continuous employment in the Locality defined for at least the last 9 months and for a minimum of 16 hours per week immediately prior to occupation; or

(2) The person needs to live in the Locality defined because they need substantial care from a relative who lives in the Locality defined, or because they need to provide substantial care to a relative who lives in the Locality defined. Substantial care means that identified as required by a medical doctor or relevant statutory support agency; or

(3) The person has been continuously resident in the Locality defined for three years immediately prior to the occupation of the dwelling and is need of another dwelling resulting from changes to their household as detailed in informative 1 below:

V2 March 2022

- The 'Locality' is defined as the Council's administrative wards of Newton, Bishopston, West Cross, Mayals, Oystermouth, Gower, Pennard and Penclawdd.

An 'Only or Principal Home' is a dwelling house that is occupied continuously for a minimum period of six months in every twelve month period. For the avoidance of doubt the dwelling shall not be occupied as a holiday home, second home or for short term let accommodation.

Local Needs Housing information is defined as follows:

- 1. The circumstances where a person needs another dwelling resulting from changes to their household are (but not limited to), getting married, divorced, having children, requiring more space for a growing family, downsizing to a more manageable home or adult children forming new households and purchasing a property for the first time, or where a person is returning to the Locality defined within 12 months of the completion of undertaking full-time post-secondary education or skills training.*