

MUCH Newsletter Summer 2023

## Sustainable Living for Over 50s

Building A Community for Our Futures

### MUCH update



Since the last newsletter we have met with some potential new members and are hoping to meet with others in July. So we're planning...

**A social gathering Tuesday 11th of July.**

**from 11am until about 12:30**

**at North Star Deli, 418 Wilbraham Rd, Chorlton M21 0SD**

Join us for coffee!

We're looking for more intrepid adventurers to join us on the MUCH journey.  
Email us for more information or to let us know you're coming and we'll keep an eye out for you.

### Keep cool and carry on!

The recent prolonged warm weather, together with lack of rainfall followed by deluges, has helped to focus our minds on why our future homes should be designed, and built, to adapt to a changing climate.

In our own homes some of us have been practising night purging, closing windows and curtains during the day and only opening them in the evening, and overnight if safe to do

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so, when it is cooler outside than inside. If you don't do this already, why not give it a try – and leave doors inside your home ajar overnight to draw cooler air through your home.

### MUCH meet Housing 21

MUCH members met with Housing 21's Director of Cohousing and a member of their development team recently. They are a Housing Association who are actively promoting cohousing, although using a different route from that taken by most groups, and working closely with the UK Cohousing Network. They already specialise in housing for older people, and are now piloting cohousing, with two schemes on the go in Birmingham.



Their approach is to earmark pieces of suitable land, and then find local trusted agencies to work with Housing 21 and 'older people of modest means' in an existing community to come together as future cohousing residents. This includes design, early allocation of properties to households, choosing a model of management for living in cohousing and supporting the community throughout.

Nearly all their cohousing properties will be for social rent with some shared ownership. This means it's not possible for Housing 21 to act as developers for MUCH at present, but we do intend to keep in touch.

Their first cohousing scheme is due to start on site this summer and their plans show that they have clearly understood the principles of cohousing design, and incorporated the [HAPPI principles](#), with light and airy spacious flats all overlooking a central courtyard, and plenty of shared spaces.

Well done Housing 21 - we wish you every luck in this venture!

### News from the UK Cohousing Network

Two MUCH members attended the UK Cohousing Network's AGM in June and heard about the different threads of work the organisation is involved with: influencing politicians, sharing insights with academics and learning from visits and networking all with the aim of promoting cohousing in the UK.

You can read a roundup of recent activities in their most recent [newsletter](#).

Following the formal business of the AGM, three groups gave updates on their progress.

All three have shown determination, perseverance, and resilience over many years to get to where they are today and are an inspiration for all developing groups.

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Chapeltown Cohousing in Leeds have now moved into their homes (this photo was taken nearly a year ago), and although the Common House is not yet quite ready, they are enjoying coming together as a community, both indoors and out, with children enjoying making new friends and playing in the car free spaces.

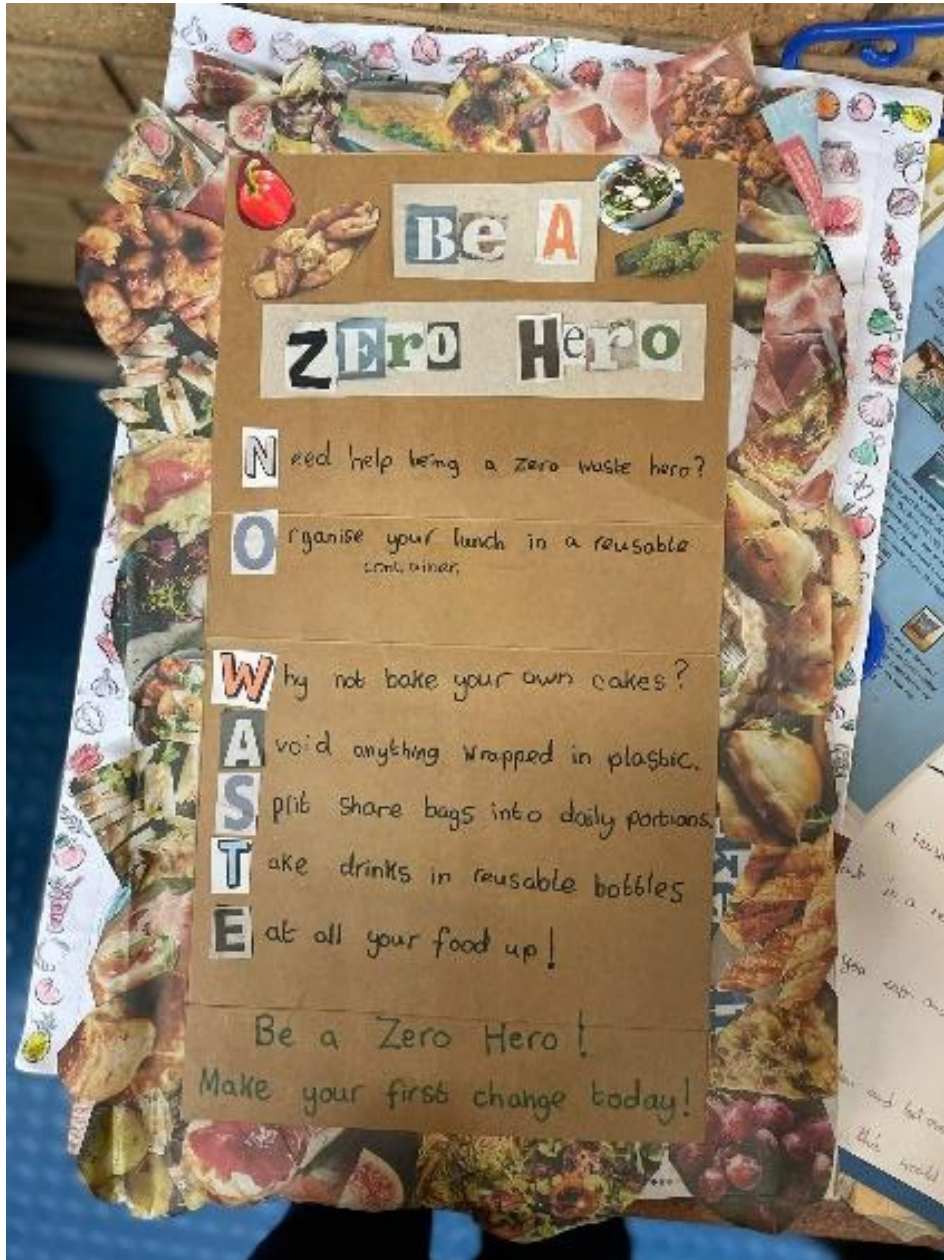
Five Rivers Cohousing in Sheffield are finally in the build phase, with their timber framed homes going up at a startling rate. There are still lots of decisions to be made about internal finishes but the residents hope to be moving in by the end of the year (fingers crossed!).



Bridport Cohousing in Dorset have started to move into their new homes, and expect all to have moved in over the next month or so. The scheme includes a microgrid system for providing clean, green, locally generated energy for residents. To date, this is the largest community microgrid in the UK. The giant solar panels that cover much of the roof spaces generate sustainable power which is stored on-site in a high-capacity shared battery and redistributed for all customers.



## Eco-Schools



One of our members has been working for some time with Eco-Schools. The creative image above shows how some of the children intend to stop waste. She has also been helping Further Education colleges listen to children talking about the kinds of green skills so many of them want to develop. These include the retrofitting of old buildings and the eco design and engineering of new buildings so they are resilient to extreme weather caused by climate change.

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## It's holiday season!

And finally, proving it's not all work and no play, between us we have had quite a few holidays already this spring and early summer, and it's *still* only June.

From a month long adventure by rail and ferry to Sardinia, an unexpected climbing of big hills in the Lake District, singing at the VARIOUS VOICES 2023 festival in Bologna, birdwatching on Arran, eating arancini on the beach at Weston Super Mare and visiting the Isle of Wight, to discovering the industrial heritage of Weardale in County Durham.



We do get about don't we?



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We hope you've enjoyed this newsletter. Do get in touch if you'd like to know more about any of the content.

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