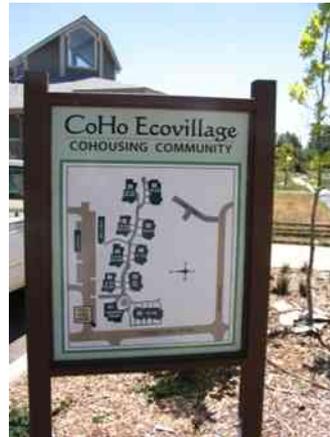


# Sustainable Newcastle – what does this really mean? Conference May 6<sup>th</sup> 2017

Community-led housing + sustainable de-growth  
for Tyne and Wear



## Dr Helen Jarvis



# Outline

- Short presentation (15 mins) + Q&A
  - What is de-growth?
  - What is community-led housing and how does it help?
  - In particular, cohousing
  - NE examples
  - Concluding issues
- Things Audit and Sharing Survey (either/both)
- Open space discussion: sharing for de-growth in Newcastle, what are the options?

# What is de-growth?

“an equitable downscaling of production and consumption that increases human well-being and enhances ecological conditions at the local and global level, in the short and the long term”

- Four transformations:
  - (i) Extending human relations instead of market relations
  - (ii) Deepening democracy
  - (iii) Defending ecosystems
  - (iv) Realising a more equal global distribution of wealth

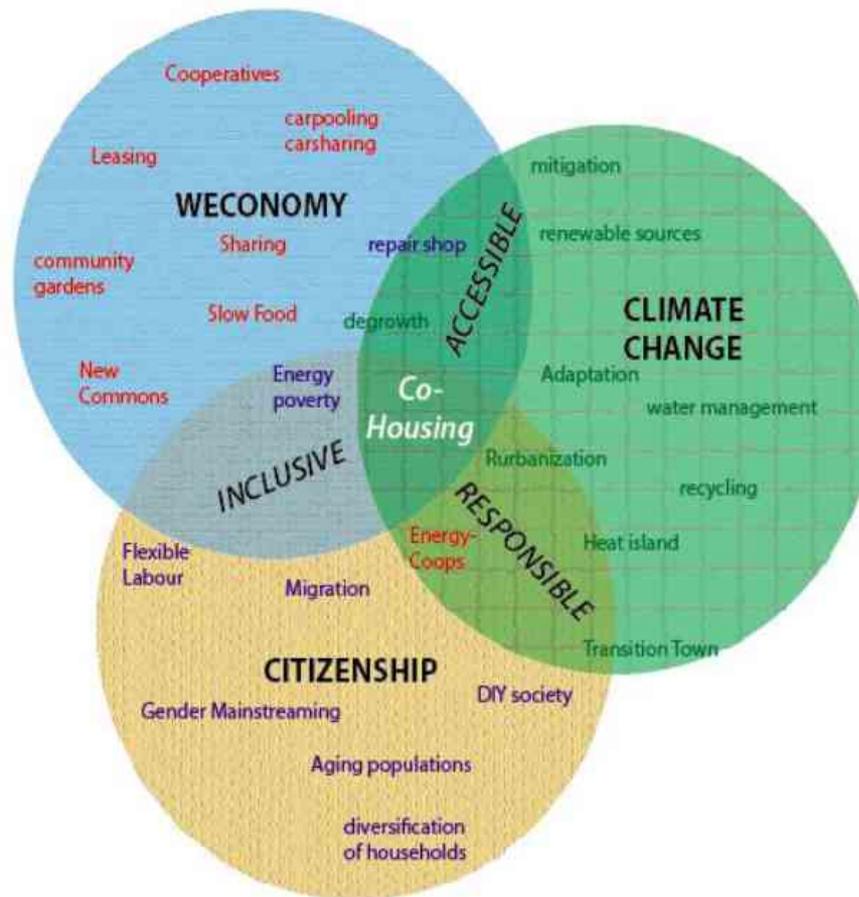


Figure 1: Grass-roots practices in the triple P/sustainability triangle [source: Tummers, 2016]

## What is community-led housing?

- local people choosing to develop housing to meet the housing needs of local people
- Takes a variety of forms:
  - Group-led (e.g. cohousing)
  - Extension of community-based activity (e.g. CLT)
  - Developer-community partnership (e.g. Changing Lives, Gateshead)



The screenshot shows the BSHF (Building and Social Housing Foundation) website. The header includes the BSHF logo, navigation links (Home, About BSHF, Our programmes, World Habitat Awards, Publications, News, Contact us), and a search bar. The main content area features a large image of hands building a brick wall with the text 'Community-led housing'. Below this is a sidebar with a 'Community-led housing' menu and a 'Submit your project' button. The main content area has a 'Community-led housing' heading and an 'Introduction' section. The introduction text states: 'BSHF is currently supporting the growth of community-led housing through an intensive programme of promotional and collaborative activity. This activity is being supported by the Nationwide Foundation as part of their Alternative Housing Models funding programme. Because BSHF is independently funded, all of the available funds will be channelled into supporting and increasing community-led housing activity. Our programme activities have a UK focus (mostly in England) but with links to organisations in Wales and Scotland), but we welcome opportunities to collaborate with and learn from those in other countries.' It also includes a section titled 'About Community-led Housing' which explains that the route taken depends on factors like demand, resources, and location, and lists three main ways community-led housing gets delivered: 1. Group-led: Grassroots groups responding to housing need or demand, or people seeking to deliver their own homes. 2. Extension of community based activity: Existing community based organisations with local roots decide to provide housing in addition to their current activities. 3. Developer-Community partnership: A local authority/landowner/housing association or small builder wants to provide housing that benefits the local area in perpetuity. They access community-led housing expertise to recruit 'founder members' from within the community and support them to take over ownership/ stewardship and/or management of the homes.



# Cohousing and how it can help

- Individuals work in small groups to actively participate in the design, planning and management of an 'intentional community' of private homes with additional shared facilities.



## Shared ownership and collaboration helps to reduce 'stuff'

- Cluster of 25-40 modest dwellings, size mix
- Common house for shared meals (c.3 per week)
- Communal kitchen, dining, laundry, gym, workshop and tools, guest bedrooms, garden and bike storage
- bulk-buy food; car-pool; sweat-equity/ skill-exchange



# Sharing in conviviality

- Cohousing typically combines strong social networks (intentional collective endeavour) with high performance building and design features intended to reduce environmental impact/ promote fairness and wellbeing.
- By combining actor-centred analysis with performance indicators we extend our understanding of 'sharing' to recognise social, economic, ecological and educational benefits within, between and beyond individual cohousing communities.
- Cohousing promotes strong social networks and economies of scale (economies of propinquity) by sharing some spaces, goods and services in common.
- Jarvis (2011) emphasises the social role of shared assets (including social time): collective living arrangements open up novel public spaces and practices not only to facilitate reciprocity and exchange but also as circuits of learning, doing, being and becoming.

# Tyne and Wear Community Housing Alliance

- Formed in 2016 to identify and address the barriers to CLH in the NE urban conurbations.
- Lack of 'demonstration projects' despite growing number of new groups. This contrasts with clusters in Leeds and Sheffield (Leeds Community Homes; 'people power' success).
- Particular challenges in the NE: affordability, adaptability and resilience; ageing population and brownfield sites identified as difficult and/or contaminated.



# Concluding remarks

- Intentional vs pseudo sharing
- Living together vs counterfeit community
- Economies of propinquity, not scale
- Sustaining a balance between individualism and collectivism is not a trivial challenge



**1 RAYFIELD APARTMENTS**  
Rayfield Apartments built during 1923-1925 by architect J.J. Frawley & Co.

**2 THE BIMINI HOTEL**  
The Bimini Hotel built in 1929 in honor given to the Bimini Bards.

**3 THE L.A. ECO-VILLAGE**  
Created in 1972 with the help of the neighborhood Association, a group of environmental activists, and local business and community leaders to create a learning garden for the neighborhood. The garden is a place where people can learn about the environment and live in harmony with nature.

**4 LOS ANGELES RAILWAY LINE**  
The L.A. Line came from downtown along its own right-of-way and turned around at 1st and Vermont, which was then the suburban streetcar terminus. Some of the old tracks are still visible on Vermont Place.

**5 MURAL BY LOCAL ARTIST**  
Installed in 2012 by Arriana Lema and the Data Farmers.

**6 WHITE HOUSE PLACE LEARNING GARDEN**  
The Beverly Westmont Community Land Trust is working to create a learning garden for the neighborhood. The garden is a place where people can learn about the environment and live in harmony with nature.

**7B BIMINI BATH**  
1908 - 1931 A major local attraction of Los Angeles. Both locals and visitors flocked to the Bimini Baths for the natural rich and healing hot spring waters.

**8 BIMINI SLOUGH ECOLOGICAL PARK**  
Opened in 2004, designed by Scott East. Over the park has a number of what once was. The area was marshland and part of the Arroyo de la Biciencia, which is one of many tributaries that feed the Ballona Creek.

**9 BLOSSOMER DANCE BALLROOM**  
Built in 1927, destroyed by a fire in 1938. Rebuilt as being the largest and most famous dance hall on the West Coast at the time. The site is a place of many memories in 1938. At the corner of 1st Street and Vermont Avenue.

**Inner-City Youth Care for Urban Forests Project**

**Bimini Place: Our History, Our Neighborhood**

Our neighborhood trees weave the fabric of our community. They are part of the infrastructure that shapes our neighborhoods. Be it a fruit tree, a native, a shade tree, or one with medicinal properties... trees can tell the story of the past and guide us into our future. Our trees are young as

we are. They are strong, distinct and beautiful. Offering fruits and nuts for everyone who passes by. Our trees shelter us from the storms and buffet us from the heat, noise and winds of the City. As stewards of our trees, we help them branch out and soak up the water that falls from our skies.

Bimini Place: Mapping out our neighborhood, landmarks and urban forests

