



The Architecture Centre

Springhill Co-housing Stroud, Gloucestershire

Notable design features

- Brownfield site
- Timber-frame construction
- Photovoltaic roof tiles
- Sustainable urban drainage system (SUDS)
- Locally sourced stone
- High levels of insulation using cellulose (recycled newspaper)
- South-facing for solar gain



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Springhill is the first new-build co-housing scheme in the UK. Co-housing aims to balance the traditional advantages of home ownership with the benefits of shared common facilities and strong connections between neighbours. The project aims to be sustainable in all areas: in its design, its construction and in the way of living adopted by residents.

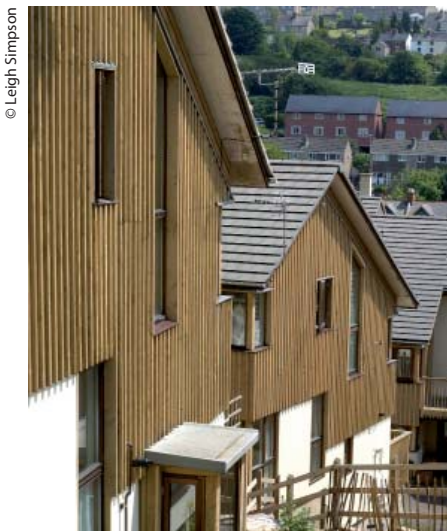
Project description

Designed by Architype, the development consists of 35 timber-framed dwellings ranging from studios to four and five bedroom units, grouped around the hub of a common house. Central to the design is its pedestrian layout, with car parking kept to the periphery. The hedges, fences and boundaries of conventional housing have been abandoned for communal areas, and street space has been freed up for social events.

to share vegetarian meals in the common house.

The co-housing movement was started in Denmark in the 1960s by a group of families who were dissatisfied with the existing housing provision. The first project was developed in 1967, aiming to combine privacy with the benefits of living in a close knit community. Five per cent of the Danish population now lives in this way.

The Springhill co-housing community was brought together by David Michael, who identified the two acre brownfield site. The development includes a shared children's play area, communal composting facilities and a community-owned flock of free-range chickens. Organic food is bought collectively and residents can choose



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Comments

“Springhill offers an innovative but practical and rather sensible 21st century version of communitarianism”

Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG)

“When homes change hands, they do so at around 15% to 20% premium over similar properties in Stroud. By being our own developer, we have gained from the notional 20% developer’s profit and the value of our homes significantly exceeds the build cost.”

Springhill resident

“I like the fact that it is safe for my children to play outside the house in the pedestrian street ... I know everyone who walks past my door. I know the children’s parents and even some of the grandchildren. It’s also a big relief to eat at the common house and not have to cook every day of the week”

Springhill resident

Essential data

Location
Stroud, Gloucestershire

Construction period
Completed April 2003

Project team
Architect: Architype

Client
David Michael, managing director of Cohousing Company Limited

Cost
£555,000 land acquisition cost
£4.2m total build cost

Awards
Eurosolar Awards 2006: Award winner
The Deputy Prime Minister’s Award for Sustainable Communities (2005): Finalist

BREEAM rating
Unknown

Further information

[Cohousing Company Limited](http://www.users.waitrose.com/~cohouses/index.htm)
www.users.waitrose.com/~cohouses/index.htm

[Architype:](http://www.architype.co.uk)
www.architype.co.uk

[The UK Cohousing Network:](http://www.cohousing.org.uk/springhill-cohousing)
www.cohousing.org.uk/springhill-cohousing

This case study was produced by the Architecture Centre. For more information about the centre visit www.architecturecentre.co.uk



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