

**PRESS ENQUIRIES**

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**PRESS RELEASE**

## **MARMALADE LANE COHOUSING, ORCHARD PARK, CAMBRIDGE**

Marmalade Lane, Cambridge's first cohousing development, is now complete and welcoming K1 Cohousing members. This marks the culmination of eight years of work by the group, and comes at a moment when custom-build and community-led housing are being recognised by the government as viable and attractive models for future housing.

The development comprises 42 homes – a mix of 2- to 5-bedroom terraced houses and 1- and 2-bedroom apartments. In common with the other c. 20 cohousing communities now established in the UK, Marmalade Lane's shared spaces and communal facilities, designed to foster community spirit and sustainable living, are integral to the development. These include extensive shared gardens as the focal space of the community, with areas for growing food, play, socialising and quiet contemplation, and a flexible 'common house' with a play room, guest bedrooms, laundry facilities, meeting rooms, and a large hall and kitchen for shared meals and parties. A separate worksop is located elsewhere on site. All residents are members of Cambridge Cohousing Ltd, have a stake in the common parts and contribute to the management of the community. Fulfilling the group's aspiration for mixed, intergenerational living, the multi-national group includes families with young children, retired and young professional couples and single-person households of different ages.

Marmalade Lane is located in Orchard Park, an urban extension to north Cambridge built from the early 2000s. Orchard Park takes its name from the historic use of the site: the 19th century orchards in the area and proximity to the railway attracted the Chivers fruit distribution and marmalade-making business. K1 Cohousing chose the name Marmalade Lane for the new car-free street running through the development to celebrate this history, and in admiration of the company's ethos and practices, which included a profit-sharing scheme first implemented in 1891, co-operative values echoed by those of cohousing communities.

The site, formerly known by its lot number of K1, was owned by Cambridge City Council. After sale of the site to a housebuilder fell through in the 2008 crash, the council agreed to work with K1 Cohousing to bring it forward for Cambridge's first enabled cohousing scheme. A two-stage open developer competition, which established bidders' design and delivery credentials before inviting financial offers, was held to find an innovative developer to translate K1 Cohousing's vision and brief into a deliverable scheme

TOWN and Trivselhus, with a design team led by Cambridge-based Mole Architects, were chosen in July 2015. Mole's competition-winning design drew on TOWN's advocacy of street-based development to create a scheme that knits into the wider neighbourhood, while meeting K1 Cohousing's need for private and shared spaces. Homes are arranged in terraces which front existing streets and create a new one – Marmalade Lane – ensuring the development looks outwards as well as in. The terraces enclose the large shared garden

with an open aspect to the south to maximise sunlight. The Common House faces south onto the garden, acting as a gateway between public and cohousing realms and a focal 'civic' building for the K1 Cohousing community. The scheme includes communal waste stores and 146 cycle parking spaces, and car parking is kept to the periphery.

As a custom-build development, each K1 Cohousing household selected one of five 'shell' house or flat types which they then configured through the floor-by-floor selection of floorplans, kitchen and bathroom fittings, and one of four external brick specifications. Wide and narrow house and 'paired' flat shells share a 7.8m-deep plan, allowing them to be distributed in any sequence along a terrace. Homes have been tailored to individual requirements without the risks or complexity of self-build, while balancing personalisation with the harmony of a visually cohesive architectural style based on repeating wall and window proportions, porches and balconies.

The brick-clad houses have been built using Trivselhus's Climate Shield closed panel timber frame system, which was precision-manufactured in southern Sweden. This ensures exceptional thermal efficiency and airtightness (and thus low energy bills for residents) and consistently high build quality, and permits configuration of floorplans to suit individual needs. Triple-glazed composite aluminium and timber windows and electrical ducting are factory-fitted, making for rapid construction on site, with a single house being able to be erected in two days. Mechanical ventilation and heat recovery (MVHR) systems in all homes ensure a comfortable internal environment, and air source-heat pumps provide low carbon electricity.

The Common House is at the physical and social heart of the cohousing community. An architectural one-off contrasting with the familiar rhythm of the terraces, this cross-laminated timber structure includes a double-height 'great hall' overlooking a terrace and the shared garden, and communal facilities and three guest bedrooms which can be booked by residents to avoid the wasted space of additional bedrooms in their individual homes. The Common House shares a lobby and lift access with 10 large, dual- and triple-aspect two-bedroom apartments across three storeys, each with a south-west facing balcony or terrace overlooking the shared garden, and a triple-aspect one-bedroom affordable flat.

K1 Cohousing grew out of rising interest in cohousing in Cambridge from the early 2000s, coalescing around the opportunity of the K1 site from 2008. With support from Cambridge City Council and expert professionals C20 Futureplanners and Instinctively Green, the group worked to establish the feasibility of development, attract new members, develop a vision and prepare a client brief, leading to the developer competition.

Following selection in July 2015, a full planning application was submitted to South Cambridgeshire District Council in December 2015. This was prepared collaboratively with K1 Cohousing, whose members participated in several workstream groups – on energy, housing, common spaces and landscape – and attended many design team meetings.

Marmalade Lane has been fully equity-financed by Trivselhus. The site was acquired by a special-purpose vehicle (a UK limited company) wholly-owned by Trivselhus UK and with a contractual joint-venture agreement with TOWN, the lead development managers. A fixed land purchase price was agreed with Cambridge City Council based on full market value, taking account of the cohousing brief, with payment of the land price deferred to be paid out of sales revenue, aiding development cashflow, and obligations on the developer to prepare a scheme in accordance with K1 Cohousing's brief and to sell completed homes to members of K1 Cohousing. Planning, construction and sales risk were transferred to the developer, ensuring that fulfilment of the cohousing brief was sensitised to commercial considerations. K1 Cohousing members who legally committed to purchase early were granted discounts, reflecting the developer's reduced sales risk, and were able to exercise greatest custom

choice over their homes. Members have purchased properties in a conventional way, with one person from each household becoming a director of Cambridge Cohousing Ltd, the owner of the site freehold and the common parts. Residents pay a service charge to equip and maintain shared facilities, and are expected to contribute to the management of the community through participation in one of several committees and working groups looking after different aspects of cohousing life. The community has a non-hierarchical structure, with decision-making by consensus.

Marmalade Lane has won the 2019 National Urban Design Awards (Public Sector), the Richard Feilden Award at the 2019 Housing Design Awards, a RIBA East Award 2019 and RIBA National Award 2019.

#### FACTS AND CREDITS

<b>Location</b>	Topper Street, Orchard Park, Cambridge CB24 TWN
<b>Site area</b>	0.97ha
<b>Gross internal area</b>	4,300m <sup>2</sup>
<b>Density (dph)</b>	42/ha
<b>Construction value</b>	£8.3 million
<b>Commissioner</b>	Cambridge City Council
<b>Client</b>	TOWN and Trivselhus
<b>Architects</b>	Mole Architects
<b>Structural engineer</b>	Elliott Wood
<b>Civil engineer</b>	Elliott Wood
<b>M&amp;E engineer</b>	Hoare Lea
<b>Landscape architect</b>	Jamie Buchanan
<b>Sustainability consultants</b>	Co-create
<b>Quantity surveyor</b>	Monaghans
<b>Project management</b>	Monaghans
<b>Contractor</b>	Coulson Building Group
<b>Timber panel system</b>	Trivselhus AB
<b>CLT system</b>	Eurban
<b>K1 Cohousing client advisor</b>	Instinctively Green
<b>Agent</b>	Savills

#### NOTES TO EDITORS

**Marmalade Lane** is a development of custom-designed homes on land formerly known as site K1, Topper Street, Orchard Park, Cambridge. Key features of the development include:

- 42 homes ranging from one-bedroom flats to five-bedroom family homes;
- a Common House including lounge, kitchen, large dining area, meeting rooms, children's play room, laundry and visitor bedrooms;
- a large shared garden (in addition to private gardens and balconies to dwellings) incorporating amenity space, rainwater management areas, food growing areas and retained trees and hedgerow;
- the scheme has been built to close-to-Passivhaus standards, achieving AECB Silver levels of energy performance to comply with Cambridge Cohousing's commitment to sustainable development.

[www.marmaladelane.co.uk](http://www.marmaladelane.co.uk)

**Cohousing** is instigated and run by residents; cohousing developments are communities where people not only know their neighbours, but actively manage their environment alongside them. As well as their individual private homes, resident households have the shared use of common facilities and spaces where they can cook, eat and socialise together.



There are currently more than 60 cohousing groups in the UK, with approximately 20 built projects.

[www.cohousing.org.uk](http://www.cohousing.org.uk)

**Cambridge Cohousing Limited** is a company formed by the K1 Cohousing Group comprising Marmalade Lane residents. One representative from each household is a director of the cohousing company, the freeholder of the development.

[www.cambridge-k1.co.uk](http://www.cambridge-k1.co.uk)

**TOWN** was appointed with Trivselhus as enabling development partners by Cambridge City Council in July 2015. TOWN is a UK-based development company founded by Jonny Anstead and Neil Murphy in 2014 to make homes, streets and neighbourhoods of a distinctive character, working with residents to create places that people will love. TOWN is a member of the UK Cohousing Network, Academy of Urbanism and Good Homes Alliance.

[www.wearetown.co.uk](http://www.wearetown.co.uk)

**Mole Architects** is an award-winning Cambridge architectural practice founded by Meredith Bowles in 1997. It is a progressive and innovative award-winning architectural practice and a leader in sustainable design. Mole produces modern designs that are appropriate to their local context, combining traditional materials and techniques with a contemporary attitude to design and building. Mole's ethos combines innovation and common sense, and celebrates individuality.

[www.molearchitects.co.uk](http://www.molearchitects.co.uk)

**Trivselhus** was appointed with TOWN as enabling development partners by Cambridge City Council in July 2015. Trivselhus is a leading Swedish building company whose expertise lies in the use of sustainably harvested wood to build homes and commercial property. Trivselhus UK, based in Newcastle, was established in response to growing demand for Scandinavian style, quality and efficiency. Trivselhus UK is the construction partner of the development joint venture, producing highly energy efficient, Swedish factory-made timber panel homes for the site.

[www.trivselhus.co.uk](http://www.trivselhus.co.uk)

**Coulson Building Group** has provided building services in the Cambridge area since 1884. The Group's headquarters is on Cowley Road, close to the site, and has a strong track record of recruiting, training and developing local people.

[www.coulson.co.uk](http://www.coulson.co.uk)



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