

INFORMATION FOR NEW MEMBERS August 2017

This leaflet outlines the membership and management structure of our neighbourhood, our consensus decision making process, and recommended reading. Although Ahi Wai has been developed by Carmel & Shaun the final structure will be a Co-Housing model.

Membership

Step 1: Come and say hello

Since Ahi Wai is all about living with supportive neighbours the first step is to come and say hello over a cup of tea. We can explain in detail about the project and answer any questions. If you like what you hear, we can put you on our email list.

Step 2: Associate Membership

Associate Membership indicates your willingness to become more involved. This may be as a supporter, or as a step towards becoming a full member and perhaps purchasing a home here. Associate membership entitles you to take part in decision-making at Full Group Meetings where you will be able to use the coloured card system for discussion and decision making. (See page 3: “Consensus Decision Making”.)

Some people choose to stay as Associate Members, whilst others move on to become Full Members.

Pre-requisites for Associate Membership:

- Read the book “*Cohousing*” by McCamant and Durrett
- Read the Initial Organising Agreement and discuss it with us
- Attend at least 2 Full Group meetings as an observer
- Visit Earthsong
- Payment of \$150

Please inform us when you are ready to take the step to becoming an Associate Member. We will need 7 days’ notice to make the necessary arrangements.

You will choose the date of the Full Group Meeting where you will be officially welcomed.

We run on the contributions of all members, and it is expected that you will join a working group.

Step 3: Full Membership

Full Membership denotes a higher level of commitment, and is a pre-requisite to purchasing a house. In the rare event of consensus not being achieved, Full Membership entitles the member to a vote. Payment of the \$3000 membership fee to the treasurer is the only pre-requisite.

When you are ready to take this step, advise us. You will be invited to an interview conducted by people who have full membership. They will make the final decision about your acceptance to be a member of the Eco-Neighbourhood.

Consensus Decision-making:

Our meetings use a consensus decision-making process which involves the use of coloured cards. You'll find an explanation of this system on the website. Consensus depends on a solid group culture with strong respect and trust, which takes time to develop.

Coming in as a new member of an established group can be challenging. We certainly want it to be as pleasant and satisfying as possible, but remember that settling in can take some time. Do ask for any support you need – we have all been through the settling in process as well!

Reading material:

A great deal of useful reading material can be borrowed (upon a deposit of \$20).

Important reading is:

- *Cohousing* by McCamant and Durrett – describes the cohousing concept extremely well (this book is required reading before becoming an Associate Member)
 - *The Information Booklet* – a collection of our most significant documentation.
 - *Past Minutes* – will give you an idea of past discussions and decisions. They are online.
 - *The Cohousing Handbook* by Hansen (1996) – this describes 'how to do Cohousing'
- There are many other books, magazines and articles available for borrowing also.