

CASE STUDY

BACKGROUND

- Visited as part of the first Suffolk Design Study Tour, Marmalade Lane, a sustainable co-housing neighbourhood comprising of 42 homes. The group learned about co-housing principles and their impact on the design, as well as the house types and customisation. They were also joined by local residents in the Common House.

Suffolk Design Marmalade Lane, Cambridge



Location: Cambridge

No. of units: 42 dwellings

Architect: Mole Architects

Developer: TOWNhus, a partnership between TOWN and Trivselhus

<https://marmaladelane.co.uk/>

KEY LEARNINGS

The collective decision making process reflects in the form of the development at every scale. From the specification of the building fabric (with triple-glazed, factory-fitted windows in pre-fabricated wall panels), to the layout of spaces in-between homes, the contributions made by those living here to the design process adds depth to the project. The variation in brick colour is not arbitrarily chosen, but is subjective to the personal preference of homeowners, from a palette of a few materials. The in-between spaces are convivial and adaptable, while there is abundant room for social interaction. Albeit, the maintenance and management of those spaces requires some dedication from residents.

The special qualities of a place can mature, given the space to do so. Room for subjectivity in policy is a positive thing.

Taken seriously, collective decision making should reflect at every scale, from layout to the building fabric.