



# Gung Ho Housing Co-op

## APPLICANT INFO PACK

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### Contact details

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Please get in touch if you would like this info pack delivered to you in a different format.

# Gung Ho joining process

*We are currently recruiting new members interested in moving in as early as 22nd October or as late as December (move-in date is negotiable).*

1. Read this document.
2. Fill out and submit the questionnaire by the end of **Wed 30th September**.
3. We will then arrange an informal interview with you for some time between **Mon 5th** and **Sun 11th October** – please keep your diary clear if possible.
4. If all goes well, we will invite you to another informal interview at a time that suits everyone between **Mon 12th** and **Sun 18th October**.
5. We will endeavour to have a decision and for you to move in as early as **Thurs 22nd October** (move-in date is negotiable).

## About Gung Ho

Gung Ho is a housing co-op. It's owned and run by the residents. This means you rent, but you get to control how you live, without any estate agents or landlords.

The house has 5 bedrooms, one 1st-floor bathroom, and bicycle parking at the rear. From the front doorstep, you can see the bus stops that go into and out of the city, taking 25mins to get into the city. It has a long rear garden with fruit trees and bushes, a greenhouse, and a tool shed.



Gung Ho is part of a community of co-ops which have decades of shared history. This includes supporting and helping to set up other co-ops, political organising, and housing those that are disadvantaged in finding housing. It's also a place for active participation in co-operative and community life.

It is expected of all of us to contribute between 3-6 hours of our time per week (4 on an average week) for house chores and Gung Ho's working groups. No previous experience is required.

We particularly encourage applications from all groups of people who are disadvantaged in finding housing, whether due to immigration status, gender, sexuality, being parents, etc. We are willing to discuss what modifications we can make to the house or otherwise to make you feel welcome here.

## Rent and bills

Rent at Gung Ho is £260.71 per month (£60.16 per week), with council tax included. This is currently cheaper than Local Housing Allowance benefit for Birmingham which, for 1 bedroom with shared facilities, is stated to be £291.13 per month, on the city council's website. This doesn't include bills which are around £50 per month, and we each put in about another £50 per month which covers our shared food and communal meals.



## What is a housing co-op?

*A housing co-op is created when a determined group of people set up their own official 'co-operative' organisation, and then raise enough money to get a mortgage to buy a property.*

The co-operative owns the house, and is run as a business by its members, who are the people that live in the house. This means there are no crappy estate agents or elusive landlords to worry about, only those who live in the housing co-op get to have a say in what happens to their house.

This means members get to be both tenants (who pay a monthly rent) and property co-owners (who get to decide together how they want the house to be, down to every detail).

This is different to property co-ownership though, as members are still just tenants, so if anyone ever moves out, there's no complicated process to follow or transfer of ownership, they just end their tenancy and someone else can move in. This keeps the co-op in collective ownership for others in the community to benefit from in the same way.

## Work responsibilities

Being a property co-owner and business co-owner means we all have to contribute to the management of the house and Gung Ho as a business. We have many responsibilities that we need to keep up with, which are broken down below – we welcome questions and feedback on these.

It is assumed that by applying to become a member at Gung Ho, you have spare time and energy to put towards these commitments. We also expect tenants to live in Gung Ho for at least one year and generally be around, living in the house.



- Paying **rent and bills**. The rent we pay is used to pay off loans, mortgages, maintenance and other costs, as well as to contribute to other projects locally or otherwise.
- We have **meetings** once every two weeks to discuss Gung Ho business items.
- There are four main groups of tasks that we share: **Admin, Finance, Maintenance, and Garden**. We will describe these to you during the interview process. No previous experience required. We only ask that you put in the effort to upskill and work with us!
- We're a member of **Radical Routes** – a national network of housing co-ops. You'll be expected to attend national weekend gatherings with us at least once a year (there are four of these a year). As a member co-op we also have a responsibility to carry out work for the network, which we share between us as a co-op. We'll tell you more about this during the interview.



Overall, we expect you to be able to contribute 4 hours of your time on a typical week towards Gung Ho. As we mentioned earlier, 4 hours is just an average. Sometimes there's more to do, but it's also okay if we're not always meeting this – it's just to give you an idea of what time you'll need in your week to put towards Gung Ho.



## Living together

Living here means that we have to look after each other socially, as well as look after all the business stuff. When we treat each other and ourselves well, we find it easier to make nice things happen.

We're generally a quiet household as we don't have ample room to have lots of people over at one time. The main road can be noisy at times from the front of the house, but the back of the house and the garden are quiet and peaceful.

We value spending time together over food or a hot drink, or sometimes as we're passing each other by in the house or in the lounge/kitchen/garden. We cook dinner for each other most of the time, which makes dinner time the best way to spend time together. We are a vegetarian house, so we don't have any meat in communal areas, and some of our members are vegan, so our communal meals tend to be vegan too. Let us know if you have any dietary requirements!



We like to invite everyone in the house to meet ups with other households and events that are happening in our pandemic/social bubble, which is a nice way of helping others feel included. We also watch movies on our projector and light a fire in the garden with dinner. Before the pandemic, we were also at the pub every so often, and we were planning to go away together.

Any communication from you about your needs will be taken into account – we want to make you feel welcome here.



## Shopping and chores

As well as cooking and eating together, we also do a weekly shop for the house, which means we spend less individually on food, there's more fridge/freezer space and less visits to the shops. Some things we buy in bulk, and we get a veg box every week.

We have a rota for chores, which helps to distribute the work fairly. These are: kitchen, lounge and halls, bathroom, toilet and bins, shopping. Sometimes we do them together with banging tunes on the stereo.



## Space for you

For those applying it may be helpful to start thinking about:

- Why do you want to live in this space?
- How will you benefit from living in Gung Ho?
- What can you bring to Gung Ho (community and building)?
- What are you bringing to the bestest city of Birmingham (if you don't live here already)?

If you have any questions for us about Gung Ho or housing co-ops in general, please get in touch by phone (Chris – 07927 134 683) or email ([hello@gungho.org.uk](mailto:hello@gungho.org.uk)).

**Don't forget to submit your answers to the questionnaire to [hello@gungho.org.uk](mailto:hello@gungho.org.uk) by the end of Wed 30th September.**

**Good luck!**

