

CROWD FUNDING SUCCESS FOR INNOVATIVE COMMUNITY SPACE AND SELF-BUILD TRAINING FACILITY FOR LONDON'S GROWING NUMBER OF HOME BUILDERS

A crowd funding initiative has successfully raised £52,598 from more than 300 backers to build London's first training facility for would-be community self-builders. The innovative building will be constructed in Ladywell, Lewisham on part of the land set aside for a new 33 home affordable self-build housing project.

The project was driven by RUSS, the Community Land Trust that has been set up to deliver the new homes. The project involves:

- Designing and building a single-storey structure on the site in Church Grove, Ladywell. The building will be used during the main construction phase of the new homes – from mid 2018 onwards
- The structure will host a series of workshops and build-days where anyone can come and learn about the construction of the new homes
- The building will also be available to local people as a community space
- RUSS will also run a programme of events and workshops with other community partners on the theme of self-building and community-led housing

RUSS chair Kareem Dayes said: "Lewisham has a history of self-building. In 1985 a group of council tenants with no previous building experience built their own homes on land provided by Lewisham Council. They were led by architect Water Segal who developed a simple and cost-effective building design that anyone could self-build."

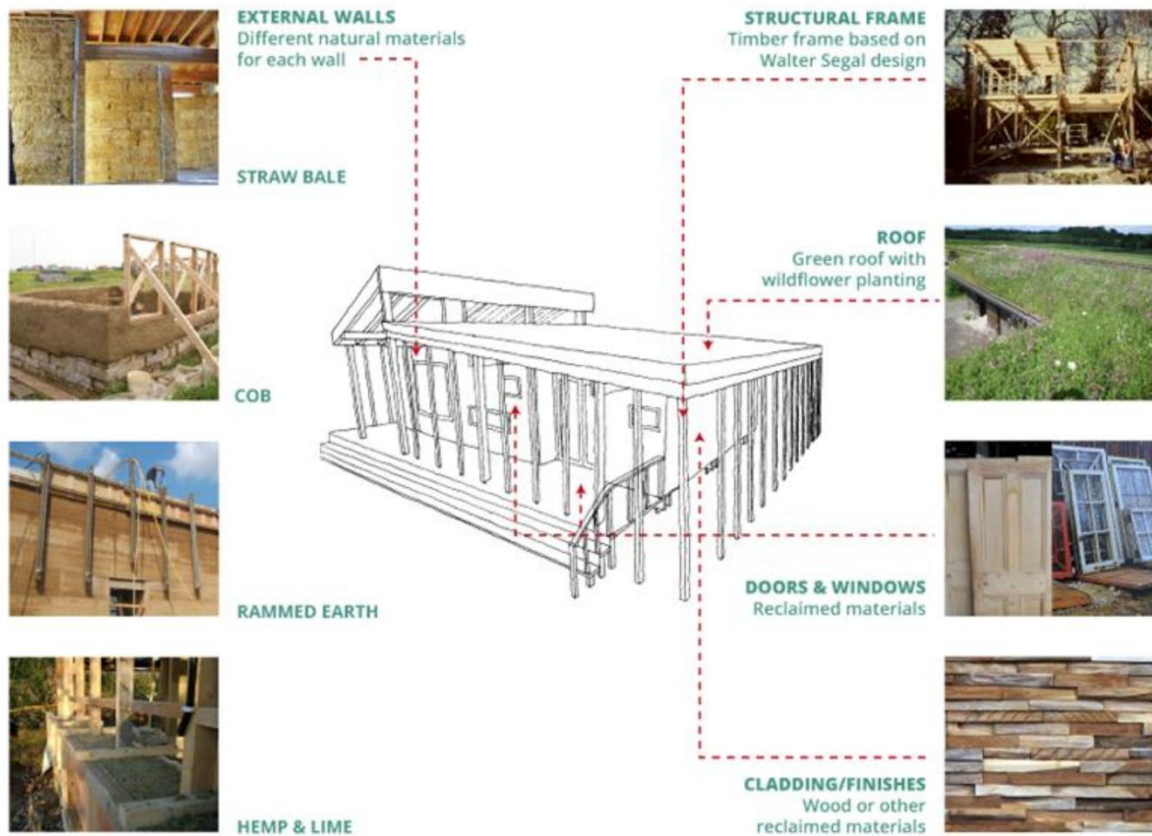
Graziano Milano, who co-ordinated the crowd funding campaign, said: "We plan to use the space to test ideas. We will also consult with the local community on our goal of creating a permanent community space that can bring new residents and the existing community together."

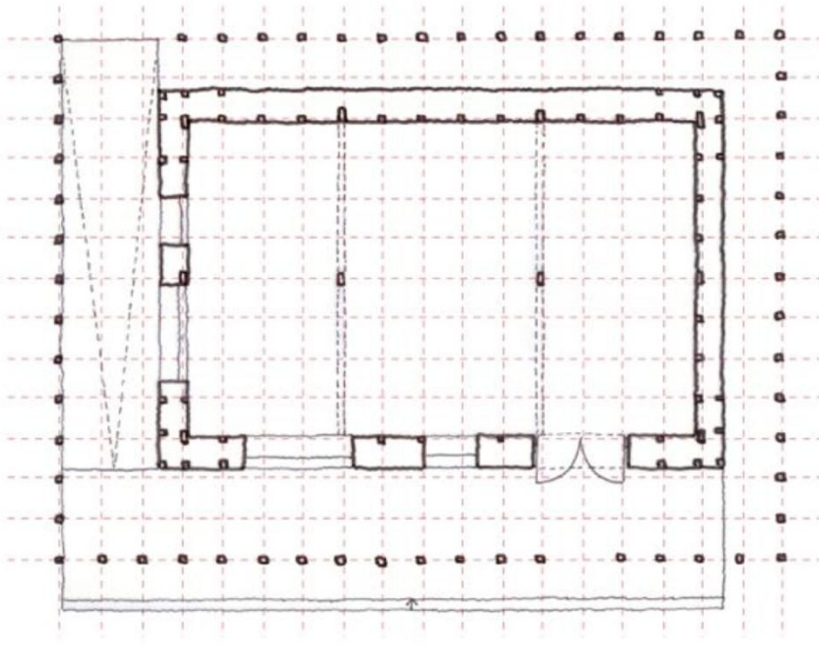
Megan Ancliffe is one of the team that developed the early designs for the training facility. She said: "The project will offer people the opportunity to get hands-on experience of building. The structure will showcase different natural building techniques such as timber, straw bale and rammed earth".

"Once built the space will host RUSS's School of Community-Led Housing with the goal of becoming a knowledge hub to share and inspire other communities in self-building and affordable housing projects".

"We intend to source materials locally so that we support the local economy. We also aim to use as many reclaimed and recycled materials as we can and we're interested in experimenting with off-grid technologies such as rain water collection."

The building is estimated to cost £52,598. The Mayor of London's initiative, Crowdfund London, provided top up funding of £30,000 to enable the scheme to meet its target.



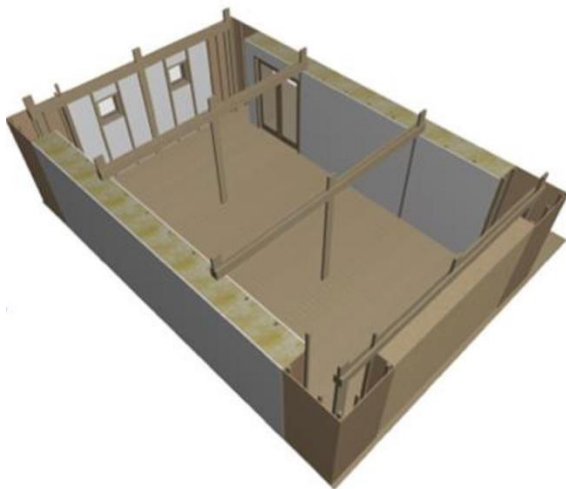


SEGAL TIMBER FRAME

The Segal frame is expressed to the interior of the space and to the exterior via decorative supports to the roof overhang.

ACCESSIBLE

Segal buildings are elevated due to their minimal groundworks. An accessible entrance will be provided via a ramp.



For further information contact Ted Stevens on 07860 336087

Editor's Note – RUSS (Rural Urban Synthesis Society) is a volunteer-led 700 member Community Land Trust based in south London. The organisation is registered with HMRC as a charity.

Founded in 2009 it was selected by Lewisham Council to take on the construction of 33 affordable self build homes on a one acre site at Ladywell. A planning application is expected

to be formally lodged for the development in the next few weeks, and construction will begin in 2018.

For more information about RUSS and the School for Community-Led Housing see our website www.theruss.org

