**Revision notes on communal living in the countryside:**

**Typical exam question:**

**How far do you agree that, in the years 1949-62, communal living was more beneficial than harmful to Chinese peasants?**

**Beneficial results of communal living:**

During the period of voluntary collectivisation communal life promised stability after the upheavals of the civil war period.

Communes provided welfare services to peasants such as housing, education etc.

Women were provided with work and child care

Communal living provided poorer peasants with better opportunities.

Peasants freed from landlord control.

Medical clinics set up to improve health. Patriotic health campaigns.

**Harmful results of communal living**

Voluntary collectivisation was replaced by enforced collectivisation after 1956

Imposition of centralised farming methods, such as Lysenkoism, led to harvest failure and famine 58-62

Falling agricultural production levels compared to pre collectivisation (private farming) levels.

Loss of personal freedoms, Women suffered particularly as a results of points based reward systems. Women received less food. Sexual abuse of women was common.

Families split up.

4 pests’ campaign/ furnaces campaign wasted time

Poor childcare facilities.

Peasant’s lives tightly controlled by the communist authorities.

Peasants considered to have ‘bourgeois’ backgrounds subject to violence and intimidation.

Forced requisitioning of food by the communist authorities.