***eLife’s* transparent reporting form**

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**Sample-size estimation**

* You should state whether an appropriate sample size was computed when the study was being designed
* You should state the statistical method of sample size computation and any required assumptions
* If no explicit power analysis was used, you should describe how you decided what sample (replicate) size (number) to use

Please outline where this information can be found within the submission (e.g., sections or figure legends), or explain why this information doesn’t apply to your submission:

Statement regarding sample size can be found in the Methods Section of the manuscript.

**Replicates**

* You should report how often each experiment was performed
* You should include a definition of biological versus technical replication
* The data obtained should be provided and sufficient information should be provided to indicate the number of independent biological and/or technical replicates
* If you encountered any outliers, you should describe how these were handled
* Criteria for exclusion/inclusion of data should be clearly stated
* High-throughput sequence data should be uploaded before submission, with a private link for reviewers provided (these are available from both GEO and ArrayExpress)

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Description of how many times the experiment was performed can be found in the corresponding figure legends. Definition of biological versus technical replication can be found in the Methods Section.

Data exclusion was done according to the following criteria: MDCK colonies that were not filling all the space defined by the stencil or that started expanding underneath the stencil before being removed were not considered. For the cell shape nematic analysis using OrientationJ, the MDCK movies in which cell-cell boundaries were not visible were not considered.

**Statistical reporting**

* Statistical analysis methods should be described and justified
* Raw data should be presented in figures whenever informative to do so (typically when N per group is less than 10)
* For each experiment, you should identify the statistical tests used, exact values of N, definitions of center, methods of multiple test correction, and dispersion and precision measures (e.g., mean, median, SD, SEM, confidence intervals; and, for the major substantive results, a measure of effect size (e.g., Pearson's r, Cohen's d)
* Report exact p-values wherever possible alongside the summary statistics and 95% confidence intervals. These should be reported for all key questions and not only when the p-value is less than 0.05.

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Description of the statistical analysis methods is provided in each figure legend, along with the exact sample size, the central tendency and the variation presented and the exact p-value.

(For large datasets, or papers with a very large number of statistical tests, you may upload a single table file with tests, Ns, etc., with reference to sections in the manuscript.)

**Group allocation**

* Indicate how samples were allocated into experimental groups (in the case of clinical studies, please specify allocation to treatment method); if randomization was used, please also state if restricted randomization was applied
* Indicate if masking was used during group allocation, data collection and/or data analysis

Please outline where this information can be found within the submission (e.g., sections or figure legends), or explain why this information doesn’t apply to your submission:

Randomization and blinding were not used in the present study.

**Additional data files (“source data”)**

* We encourage you to upload relevant additional data files, such as numerical data that are represented as a graph in a figure, or as a summary table
* Where provided, these should be in the most useful format, and they can be uploaded as “Source data” files linked to a main figure or table
* Include model definition files including the full list of parameters used
* Include code used for data analysis (e.g., R, MatLab)
* Avoid stating that data files are “available upon request”

Please indicate the figures or tables for which source data files have been provided:

Figure 1, Figure 1-figure supplement 1 and Figure 1-figure supplement 2

Figure 2 and Figure 2-figure supplement 1

Figure 3

Figure 4 and Figure 4-figure supplement 2

Figure 5, Figure 5-figure supplement 2, Figure 5-figure supplement 4 and Figure 5-figure supplement 5

Figure 6-figure supplement 3

Figure 7-figure supplement 1

Figure 8 and Figure 8-figure supplement 1