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FAMILIES

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CENTRAL COAST'S FAVOURITE FAMILY MAGAZINE



Narara Ecovillage: Where families thrive in community



Could family life be just a little bit easier, more connected and purposeful?

School holidays are here so: can I get help to entertain my kids and manage my day-to-day life?

I need some time with my partner: can I ask my neighbours to mind our child for a couple of hours?

Our home seems cramped: can I access more space for the kids to play and have fun?

Sometimes I feel sad, isolated: can I find easy and supportive social connections?

I love free-range eggs and free-range children: can I have both at Narara Ecovillage?

I feel that I'd like to contribute to something bigger than my immediate world: can I do this with others there?

Yes, yes, yes, yes, yes, yes and yes!

At Narara, closely connected village life is balanced by the freedom of field and forest on the stunning 68 hectare property which borders on the Strickland State Forest.

School holiday activities are jointly organised; play dates happen organically; neighbours share care to allow parents time out; connections are made and deepened at our Coffee Cart, in the veggie gardens, in our adventure playground. People come together in the village for Solstice and Equinox celebrations, at yoga, meditation, dance, singing, shared dinners and through projects great and small that arise spontaneously and organically.

There are myriad ways to care for our shared property and demonstrate our commitment to a regenerative and resilient future for our children and, by extension, all of Life.

Sounds delightful, but what about the dollars?

Can we save money living in this ecovillage?

Another big 'yes', answers this question. Quoting from one of our parents: "Our family is better supported socially, we are empowered to live more gently on the earth, and we are saving money at the same time."

This mother of three goes on to say: "In the last 12 months we have



saved \$16,424 by living here instead of a comparable 'normal' suburb.... We have received furniture, clothing and plants, as well as less tangible rewards such as foraging and food growing advice. Another way we save money is through the logistical perks associated with living closely with a village of other people. We co-ordinate grocery trips, mail drop-offs, library returns, school bus runs, child-care, as well as maintenance work on our own homes and gardens. Saving trips saves petrol, parking, and over-consumption. It also frees up my time to work, care for children, volunteer around the village, or just relax on our beautiful property."

Want to know more?

Narara Ecovillage is located 10 minutes from Gosford and is still in the exciting stage of 'emergence'. We currently have about 180 people engaged, ranging from ~8 months to 80 years, including 40 children.

We purchased the Gosford Horticultural Centre from the NSW government in 2012 and it is the most beautiful parcel of land in the world - if you can picture: forest, a stream, floodplain and 45 megalitre dam. The village is close to suburban facilities, the north/south train line, the coast and beaches.

We set up a cooperative to carry out the development in 3 stages and sell lots - community title freehold, which is a bit like strata. What's hugely different about this project is that it is community-driven; we started with people first, not land; we don't have a bank involved; and when we make any surplus, it goes back into the community.

We are environmentally-focused with people building natural, sustainable and

healthy homes. We draw inspiration from permaculture and consider wildlife in looking after our environment and are growing more food year by year.

40 of the 60 homes that make up Stage 1 are already built. With Stage 1 now fully subscribed, Stage 2's Development Application has been submitted to Central Coast Council and we are expecting a positive outcome any day now for around 40 lots.

If you love the idea of living in community, if you know it would enrich your life and the lives of your children, you have nothing to lose, and potentially so much to gain, by coming to see for yourself.

What holds us together?

We have a strong focus on the social aspects of living together and enthusiastically utilise a governance model called Sociocracy for organising our community and making decisions. We aim to be transparent, inclusive and fair and this model helps enormously. We honour all voices and with the support of the parents, our young people have their say too.

Interest in Narara Ecovillage is accelerating: it certainly seems to be a project whose time has come. We have survived a Global Financial Crisis and a Global Pandemic and feel that we are as resilient as we can be, facing the future together in the best interests of our children and our children's children's children.

We warmly welcome visitors and our website nararaecovillage.com offers inspiration, information, pictures and useful answers to Frequently Asked Questions. If you'd like more information, or to arrange a family tour, our email address is: info@nararaecovillage.com