

Case Study 1



Greg and Sue

Greg and Sue are a young couple aged 27 and 28 years who are saving for a deposit for their first house. Greg works full-time as an electrician and Sue works part-time at the local café in Burleigh Heads, QLD. On their combined income they have saved a deposit for a house over the last two years. They are currently renting a two-bedroom townhouse in Burleigh Heads.

Their dream is to live in community in the Byron Shire. Living in the Gold Coast is not what they dreamed of when they first met each other at an alternative festival celebrating sustainable lifestyles. They also want to have their own house for security and for raising future children.

They are daunted however at the possibility of owning their own house in Byron Shire considering the current price for a new house in Mullumbimby is over \$600,000, in Brunswick Heads is \$750,000 and in Byron Bay is more than \$800,000!

Bruns Eco Village Option

Sue and Greg can pay the bond for their house in Bruns Eco Village using their saved deposit. They can also just afford the initial \$1,000 each for the initial registration for the Village Development Program (VDP) from their weekly earnings.

Once their house is built they will be paying approximately the same amount per week as they currently do in Burleigh Heads for a new two-bedroom home in Bruns Eco Village. They now enjoy the security of having their own home however as the house is on a lifetime lease. They also do not have to fear rent rises or changes.

As they are now financially better off than if they bought a house, Greg and Sue decide to save some money for investment and to enjoy the quality of life they have been craving. They have the option to invest this saved money into the Bruns Eco Village co-op for a dividend or buy an investment property elsewhere where prices are still affordable. Alternatively Sue could give up her part time job to have children without that being a major financial issue or stress.

The amount of money saved over time will accumulate, as their utility costs will never rise. Additionally, they will not have to pay for rates or maintenance on their house and given the right circumstances they can use their car much less. Greg and Sue also benefit from being members of the Bruns Eco Village co-op as they are included in decisions made regarding the co-operative's cash flow, which is shared amongst the community.

After 22 years Sue and Greg decide to leave the village and the co-op. They leave with their bond, kids who have grown up in community, and whatever money they have saved or invested to get them going on their next stage of life. One of their children who has reached 18 years of age decides to stay on the community, pays his bond and becomes a member and lives with friends in a share house on the community. One day he may move into a house of his own to start a family – with his bond being transferable.

Greg and Sue decide to save some money for investment and to enjoy the quality of life they have been craving.



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Case Study 2



John, Belinda and Family

John and Belinda, aged 35 and 39, have two young children and have recently bought a house in Mullumbimby. They have mortgage repayments, rates fees, maintenance and utility costs. John is an IT specialist and works six days a week to ensure the family get by. Belinda is too busy with the children to consider working at the moment. They currently have no money saved.

John and Belinda remember what it was like living close to the land as they were both raised on farms in country New South Wales. With this background, they both value raising their children with more time, attention and community spirit. Bruns Eco Village is the answer for them.

Bruns Eco Village Option

John and Belinda decide to live at Bruns Eco Village. They sell their home and use the money they have left over to pay their bond and the rest they invest into Bruns Eco Village co-op.

They are now paying rent for a three bedroom home on a lifetime lease with no extra costs.

Additionally their investment in Bruns Eco Village is bringing a dividend, which reduces their weekly rent. John can now work 4 days a week and bring home more than enough for them to live on. They can also rely on not having to deal with extra costs in the ecovillage. John and Belinda get to enjoy much more free time with the kids. The family now only needs one car due to the kids going to the local school. Belinda is a member of the car share program so transport is available when John is at work with the family car.

When John, Belinda and the kids decide to leave the co-op ten years later they leave with their bond and their investment. Although they may not have a huge asset to rely on they still have enough money to begin a new chapter somewhere else. If they decide not to leave they can pass on the lease to their children, it being a lifetime lease.

OR

John and Belinda could keep their original home and rent it out to cover their mortgage and costs. However, they would be required to take out a loan to pay the bond at Bruns Eco Village. This would mean John would still need to work five days a week to cover the rates and costs of their investment house in addition to the payments on the bond loan. They would however have an investment property for their retirement.

The family now only needs one car due to the kids going to the local school.



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Case Study 3



Joanna and her children

Joanna, 40 years old, has three children aged 7, 10 and 13. She grew up in a community in the 80's and is desperately seeking community life again since her divorce. She is currently on government payments and is renting a house in Ocean Shores.

Things are pretty tight and her background as a school teacher has not helped her prospects of finding a job in the last three years within a region of high unemployment. She has no money saved and lives week to week. Her landlord has indicated that she will have to move soon. Unfortunately this will be her second move in a period of two years.

Bruns Eco Village Option

Joanna applies for the \$1000 registration and gets a loan through the Community Centre to pay for this. She then raises the money needed for her house bond with a no-interest loan from her parents. She is surprised that the bank will also lend her the amount needed as the bond is refundable when exiting the community.

Joanna takes out a lifetime lease on a three-bedroom home at Bruns Eco Village, which costs the same as her current rental situation. However, she also needs to pay back the loan her parents gave her. As she is unemployed, Bruns Eco Village offers her a position in the co-op for half a day each week maintaining one of the common areas to help with this. The Bruns Eco Village co-op policy is that all positions that arise within the co-op are offered to members first – especially unemployed members. Joanna is now \$50 per week better off and also has the security of a long-term home for her family within a supportive community. On the strength of this support, she is motivated to find suitable employment that will serve her and her family's future.

Joanna is able to enjoy the co-op's facilities (such as the Wellness Centre) at discounted prices, and enjoys supporting her health, making new friendships and having the sense of community that she's always wanted.

Bruns Eco Village offers her a position in the co-op for half a day each week maintaining one of the common areas to help her out financially.



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Case Study 4



Julie and Nelson

Julie and Nelson, aged 55 and 57 years are semi-retired. Their two children, aged 20 and 22 years, have left home and now live in the city. They've lived in their own home since they married (which they bought in 1980) and now find themselves seeking a 'sea change' and craving a community of like-minded people who are keen to live sustainably.

Nelson works part time as an advisor to a law firm while Julie is involved in many local volunteer groups. Conscious of the environment and their ecological footprint, they both want to live more sustainably and grow more of their own food.

THEY DECIDE TO MOVE INTO BRUNS ECO VILLAGE AND HAVE TWO OPTIONS:

Bruns Eco Village Option 1

They sell their house and invest in Bruns Eco Village co-op as they believe in the vision of the project and want to see it thrive. They give their kids some inheritance money and put the remaining money towards their bond for a lifetime lease two-bedroom house in Bruns Eco Village. Their investment gives them a return in the positive and therefore they not only live at Bruns Eco Village for free but also have a small income.

Nelson occasionally works to supplement their income when needed. This is enough for them to live on due to their low cost lifestyle and love of growing food. They also don't have to pay for utilities and rates anymore. Their investment is returned in 20 years time when they're thinking about offering more financial support to their children as well as a big holiday for themselves. At that point, their pension/super fund covers their living costs in Bruns Eco Village.

Bruns Eco Village Option 2

They rent their existing property and live in Bruns Eco Village. The rent from the investment property covers their cost of living in Bruns Eco Village. In 20 years time they may sell their house and invest that money in a new house or eco village project.

In both scenarios they are integrated into a supporting community and are active in a number of groups and activities in the eco village. They have become mentors for two younger members in the village, relationships that have then developed into strong friendships. They also are learning new permaculture skills, growing new types of food and occasionally have guests stay with them in their home who are interested in eco village living and the living green school.

Julie and Nelson have become mentors for two younger members in the village, relationships that have since developed into strong friendships.



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Case Study 5



Sam

Sam is 30 years old, is a graphic designer and has travelled extensively around the world. On his last trip he lived in a community and realised that he now wants to do the same in his home country, Australia. He has lived in share houses most of his life but is seeking more independence and a place to call his own.

He currently shares and rents with two others in Suffolk Park and enjoys living close to the beach.

Sam has a little money saved over the years and with some help from his latest project he should have enough for a bond at Bruns Eco Village. He is proud of the fact that he has savings but realises they are probably not enough to buy a house as his income is sporadic.

Bruns Eco Village Option

Sam pays \$1000 to register, joins Bruns Eco Village and pays his bond from his savings. He is inexperienced in the arena of financial investment but knows he doesn't want to leave his money sitting in a bank. Any remaining money Sam has left he invests into Bruns Eco Village. He saves the dividends he receives from his investment for his next overseas adventure. During the Village Development Program Sam connects with a group of people in a similar life phase as him and they decide to live in a cluster together. They co-design a co-house together where each person has their own space but also share some common areas. He did consider his own one bedroom place but didn't want to pay the additional rent and bond for it. In the co-house he pays less rent, but gets to have his own space while being part of a great cluster that includes families and single people like himself. When he does travel again the co-op organises for his room to be rented to a prospective member and he receives some of the return. He also knows he has a place to come back to.

Although he has signed a lifetime lease with the co-house he also knows that if he does eventually want his own house he will be first in line when one becomes available as he is already a resident and a member of the co-op.

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Case Study 6



Jim

Jim has always had a way with business and is good at working things out. Over the years he has made enough money from numerous ventures to live comfortably for the rest of his life. Jim has settled in one of the most beautiful parts of Australia, Byron Bay, and is interested in innovation and sustainable technology.

Jim also has some money presently that he needs to invest and is looking at various options. Jim hears about Bruns Eco Village and is keen to get involved. He doesn't want to live there as he loves his house.

Bruns Eco Village Option

Jim investigates the investment return that Bruns Eco Village offers as well as the scope and ethics of the project. He decides to invest money in Bruns Eco Village based on a reasonable and secure return. In order to invest, Jim is required to become a member of the eco village co-op. This involves a swifter but different process to that which residents undergo. As a member Jim has the ability to see how things are progressing with the village and his investment. He also has the opportunity to establish a relationship with other co-op members and residents. Jim often shows his visitors through the eco village and educates them about the many facilities and innovative technologies it adopts. Jim knows he can invest elsewhere anytime he wants, however he enjoys being involved in Bruns Eco Village and wishes to stay invested there for as long as is possible.

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