

# Community Information and Agreements

## Community Agreements - Maleny Eco Village, QLD

All Eco Village Australia (EVA) communities adhere to the EVA 'Vision and Values'. This document further outlines Maleny Eco Village agreements. Some of these are not negotiable, and some can be renegotiated as new members join. As you enter into this community, please discuss points of difference before you agree.

## I. Basic Information

Maleny Eco Village  
37 Centenary Dr, Maleny  
malenyhealing@gmail.com  
0439 532 299  
<https://www.ecovillages.au>

### Founders

Andrew McLean & Claire Ogden



Before the repair of the workers cottage

## II. About Us

Maleny Eco Village (MEV) is a small eco village community focussed on sustainability, connection and healing. Residents are stewards of the land which we call home.

We seek to live lightly, sustainably and regeneratively. This means behaviour change, but in community it's a lot easier.

Andrew started visioning with the publishing of the 'Seeding Document' in 2016, and EVA bought the property at 37 Centenary Drive, Maleny in 2019 when the founders moved in. We have had 20 short-term residents from 2019-2022.

In Dec 2022, the community changed direction and became a hub for healing. Co-founder Andrew McLean moved out to start a new project.

### Mission Statement

We are a small community that focuses strongly on connection to self, others and earth.

We aim to demonstrate the joys of living a low-carbon, simple 'home-based economy' lifestyle and exploring energetic healing.

Eco Villages Australia

### Community Keywords

Community, sharing (resources, lives, stories, skills), intentional, sustainable, participation, permaculture, fresh food, teamwork, simplicity, robust, resilience, space, safe, frugal, abundant, art, music, intergenerational, vibrant, beautiful, healthy, design, outdoors, energy efficient, minimalism, low footprint, living lightly, humanity, enjoyment, fun, healing, meaning, peace, trust, support, love, vulnerability, biodiversity.

### Community Network Affiliations

- The Fellowship for Intentional Community (FIC)
- Global Ecovillage Network (GEN)

## III. Housing

### Land and residences.

#### Land

We purchased the land, on Jinabara country, in May 6 2019 under the ownership of the non-profit - Eco Village Australia. It is 3.48 acres (1.41 Hectares) in Maleny bordering the Showgrounds (which is the birthplace of the world famous Woodford Folk Festival).

The property had 5 buildings on it. 4 old wooden buildings (circa 1930) which needed repair, which we did in the first 12 months.

#### History of land after colonisation

- Jimmy and Hilda Grigor owned a dairy on this site. The Grigors or previous owner donated the showgrounds to the people of Maleny c1920.
- c1966 Max and Val Graham (Hilda's niece on Father's side) bought the farm around 95 Acres. They lived in the "bunkhouse". They ran the dairy until they went broke (deregulation), they raised 2 children and the co-founders met Val (lives at 41 Centenary - which was built on the dairy)
- Rob Norris (a Vet) bought and subdivided 4 acres. He built

'Norris house' - now the soccer and pony club house. Cows used the workers cottage! Centenary Drive was built at this time.

- Ian Nicol bought in 1978 for \$14,500 (and had to shovel cow manure out of the house). Dam and internal road was built around 1980. In 1989, there was still no electricity. Council diverted the storm water to bottom gully - it was dry beforehand. ½ acre was subdivided in 1984 and the top house pad was cut in 1986. Ian still lives at 39 Centenary.
- 1988 sold to John Denman for \$58,000. April 1990 sold for \$89,000. March 1991 sold for \$99,000.
- 1993 October. sold to Peter Erdmann for \$140,000. c2006 Ribbonwood development started and Houses in Ribbonwood started to be built around 2010, most built by 2015, all by 2017
- 25th March 2019. Property bought by Eco Villages Australia for \$656,000 at a Public Trustee Auction.

#### Surrounding culture

Maleny has a strong alternative/creative, environmentally-aware and socially progressive population. There is an equally strong right wing representation. It has slowly gentrified now with many professional people and wealthy people live in Maleny as well as poorer and homeless people.

#### History of area

First Nations used this area for the famous bunya festivals; attracting visitors from thousands of kilometres away. After colonisation it was a logging then later a dairy area, until most of the dairies went broke due to de-regulation in the 1960's. A economically depressed town then attracted lots of 'hippies' and artists. We have more artists per sq klm than anywhere in Australia.

## Community Agreements - Maleny Eco Village, QLD

### **Proximity to population:**

Maleny > 8 minute walk. 2800 people

Landsborough > 15 minute drive. 4000 people

Caloundra > 30 minute drive. 51,000 people

Brisbane (Capital) > 1.5 hours. 2.5 million people

### **Proximity to Services:**

Hospitals : Maleny

Schools: Maleny

Medical Center: Maleny

Public transport: train from Landsborough Station. 19 services from Brisbane City to Landsborough daily. Bus from the main street in Maleny to Landsborough.

### **Proximity to Attractions:**

Maleny Diaries - 3 mins drive

Gardeners Falls - 4 mins drive. 20 min walk

Baroon Pocket Dam - 12 mins drive

Australia Zoo - 15 mins drive

Montville - 15 mins drive

Kondalilla Falls - 20 mins drive

Crystal Waters Eco Village - 20 mins drive

Glasshouse Mountains - 15-20 mins drive

Caloundra beach - 30 mins drive

### **Topography of block**

North facing block (Perfect for growing food and living). Dam and wetlands in the centre. Steeper to the south side of the dam. North side of dam is flat and then gentle slope down to 100 year flood level (tributary seasonal gully line of Obi Obi Creek)

### **Vegetation**

Rainforest trees, Magnificent Moreton Bay Fig (probably the second biggest in the area until a storm in Jan 2020 brought down 30% of the tree), and about 8 bunya trees. Many mature trees, partly north of dam and around border. Quite a few weed trees. And a lot of fungi!

We have a few garden beds. with a focus on perennials and native food. We plan to restore native

rainforest, have just planted a sub-tropical food forest, orchard and garden.

### **Climate**

The wettest town in the Sunshine coast hinterland. Average of about 1800mm. The last 5 years have been quite dry. The Obi Obi river stopped running in 1918 and 1951 but already 3 times this century. The summer of 2021 was wetter.

### **Fauna**

There are 60+ Species of birds, Brush Turkeys, Bandicoots, Water dragons, Pythons, Red-Belly Black Snakes, fish stocked dam, many many frogs and possums on the property. We even spotted an echidna.

### **Proximity to neighbours**

Neighbours on 2 sides. Ecovillage borders Maleny show grounds. We have put a lot of effort into creating and maintaining good reciprocal relationships with our close neighbours with mixed success.

### **Built Environment - Past**

After purchasing the property, we repaired the main house recently, including installing insulation. The outdoor eating area has been established in a retro-fitted shed, toilet shed repaired. Cottage newly repaired. Vegetable garden established. Newly planted food forest, Some weed management undertaken, bush regeneration with native tree planting. Dam has been de-silted and deepened.

### **Built Environment - Now**

We live quite simply. We have many shared facilities - laundry, outdoor eating area, pantry, workshop (old dairy bails), dam, deck, community space, limited storage area, library, garden, outdoor shower, and food forest.

### **Built Environment - Future**

We don't currently plan to upgrade the buildings or expand the property.

The Sunshine City Council currently does not allow tiny houses on wheels (THOW) permanently, so for this village we

will be relying on built structures that use tiny house principles.

### **How can one access housing?**

Everyone rents. This allows makes it easy to leave if circumstances require. No one owns the land or buildings, so we can achieve 100% occupancy - as people can move into different size accommodation as their needs change.

## **IV. Residents**

### **How many in your community?**

- Adults- 4
- Children- 0

### **What percentage is comprised of:**

We have limited housing that is currently fully occupied. At this time we are not accepting new members. If you feel called to our new vision, there is an opportunity to attend for a session.

### **Visitors**

We expect visitors and welcome the new energy they bring.

We have multiple ways to visit the community

As a guest of a resident.

1. Daytime visits. Residents are free to invite anyone. Use your discretion whether to let others know.
2. Overnight visits please let the community know.
3. Multiple night visits - please ask permission from community. Food, accommodation and utilities costs are 'gift economy'; borne by the visitor or the host.

### **Membership**

We are not looking for new members and have no spare rooms.

### **Membership process**

- We approach membership via a relational, not transactional framework.

### V. Governance

#### Leadership & Decision-Making

##### **Which decision-making method does your community primarily use?**

Consensus

##### **Does your community have an identified leader?**

Athira, Claire, Ella & Gemma

##### **Does your community have a core leadership group?**

As above

#### **Preferred Communication Model**

We use Non Violent Communication (NVC), sometimes called compassionate communication.

##### **Additional "community government"**

EVA has a board, but their decisions are not about day-to-day living for the community but high-level decisions and oversight.

### VI. Economics

#### Labour & Money

##### **How is the land & buildings funded?**

As per the EVA model, residents and non-residents can loan to Eco Villages Australia and are paid back over time with the rent that is paid. Not all residents are required to loan.

The founders were able to purchase the property, and repair the buildings with private loans.

##### **Does your community require a fee or buy-in for joining?**

No one can 'buy in' to this village. Lots are not sold to individuals. Residents are encouraged to loan money which is needed to buy the land and build the infrastructure. Those who loan have no special decision making privileges. Loans are paid back over time by community members paying rent.

##### **Membership Fee**

\$20 AUD a year for full members

##### **Entrance Fee**

\$2500 AUD over 2 payments as per EVA membership process.

- ➔ Payment #1. \$500. Community Living Fund. All residents pay this. This goes to a fund to support residents in learning how to live in community. NVC (Non Violent Communication), consensus, and any conflict resolution that comes up.
- ➔ Payment #2 \$2000. Infrastructure Fee. After a provisional member becomes a 'full member', they are asked to pay this entrance fee. This fee is waived if they are able to loan more than \$15,000.

##### **How much is the ongoing contribution (per week)?**

- \$20 Food kitty (paid weekly in cash). As we share meals, all residents contribute for common food expenses. They contribute for commonly used items only (including fruit and veg). Food preferences can be purchased individually.
- Rent and utilities. We use the 'gift economy' for rent will depend on both the needs of the individual and the needs of the project. For budgeting purposes your gift will need to be set and only changed when circumstances change. The average person pays \$200-\$250 a week (includes \$25 Utilities).

##### **Needs of the project**

To pay back all the loans and make all our expenses, the village needs \$110,000 per year.

##### **Sharing of resources**

We like to personally own as little as possible, and share as much equipment as possible.

##### **Is this community a commune?**

No, we don't share income or assets.

##### **What community groups/ activities are available nearby?**

Maleny was, at one time at least, the cooperative capital of Australia. There are over 160 groups and many co-ops.

Maleny has in many ways, 'capital city' quality and an incredible array of groups available. Dance classes, circus, sports, choirs, environmental, political and action groups. Religious, educational, healing. We have it all.

##### **What Co-ops are available nearby?**

- QLD Country Bank
- Maple Street Coop. Australia's second largest food coop. Locally grown food is sold on consignment.
- Fixit Cafe. Australia's first fixit cafe runs from the neighbourhood centre
- Maleny Neighbourhood Centre. Providing community services.
- Maleny Community Center. Providing space in our 'town hall' in the main street.
- Maleny Film Society. Curated films twice a month,
- and many more.

##### **How much are residents encouraged to engage in the wider community?**

We hope to attract residents who are community minded to join and help these co-ops and groups.

##### **Gift economy**

We are very interested in experimenting with a voluntary gift economy. This generally means that people can choose to contribute time (over and above the normal living contribution of cleaning, maintenance and cooking). The project needs many types of energy.

We resonate with "Sacred Economics" by Charles Eisenstein.

##### **To what extent do the founders/directors/managers receive financial gain from the project?**

None. We are all volunteers here.

### VII. Community Sustainability Practices

#### Energy, Food, Water, Transportation

We are serious about being sustainable. The average Australian emits 15 tonnes of carbon per year. Scientists says we need to get this down to two. Now.

#### **Energy**

We have five energy sources:

1. Grid Power. We use 20% of the average household electricity from green power through behaviour change and design. We aim to get this to 10%.
2. 1Kv, 12v Solar system with 200 A/hr batteries for lighting and refrigeration. We want to expand this system.
3. 180v DC Solar Daylight Drive Microgrid. Not connected yet, but will power water pumps, air blowers, workshop tools and cooking elements.
4. LPG gas. We currently cook with LPG, but are transitioning to biogas and 180v
5. Biogas. We are successfully making biogas which we will use for cooking soon.

#### **Food production**

We have a somewhat productive garden, and all our greens and some citrus, fruits, and veggies come from the garden.

We don't buy from Woolworths, and are quite conscious of food miles. We aspire to grow much of our food on our north-facing block, and the surplus trading through locally sourced farmers, CSA's, coops or businesses.

#### **Water use**

We have two water sources:

1. A dam (spring fed 3000 kilolitre)
2. Town water

We use 15% of town water that a standard household uses and we aim to use 10% of town water that a standard household uses

We use design and behaviour change to keep water use down.

We water plants manually from the dam. Hot water for cooking and cleaning is carried from our solar hot water. Some water is captured for watering plants. We minimise shower time. We will install water tanks and solar-powered pumps in the future.

#### **Single-use plastic free**

We try very hard to be single-use plastic free, we buy in bulk to minimise packaging. We refrain buying food or drink that comes in plastic packaging. We will continue to reduce our reliance on single use plastic.

#### **Plastic free**

We are not plastic free however, we wish to move towards being plastic free. We avoid owning and purchasing plastic items (preferring wooden and metal materials). We don't allow large plastic items such as playground equipment. We avoid using soft plastic packaging, prefer to make kombucha rather than buying bottle drinks etc

#### **Composting**

We convert all kitchen scraps to compost (or bio fuel), and worm farm. We have an important policy that no organic material leaves the property. We hope to be able to collect organic material from neighbours and even businesses for composting.

#### **Level of consumerism**

We think very carefully before buying any item/gadget/tool, we buy second-hand items where possible and repair or re-purpose rather than buy. We are serious about minimising normal consumer spending.

#### **Use of animals in production of food**

We have bees from a local farmer who maintains the hives. We prefer no animals used in food productions, but open as long as no harm occurs.

#### **Prevailing food growing techniques**

We prioritise permaculture design and have syntropic beds. We are

organic and don't use chemicals/pesticides/herbicides/fungicides.

#### **Transport - Cars**

There are 0.6 passenger vehicles per person in Australia. The average passenger vehicle travelled 13,700 kms in QLD per year.

We have 0.5 passenger vehicles per person at the moment and we hope to get to 0.25. We don't measure kms travelled yet, but with e-bike access and an emphasis on walking, cycling and public transport use, hope that each vehicle will travel just 5000 kms per year. Vehicles are not allowed in the central part of the site as this is given to human scale transport, as per co-housing principles.

#### **Fossil fuel free**

We use electric tools rather than fuel powered tools and we make our own biogas for cooking as an alternative to LPG. We have a small fleet of e-bikes which are available for residents and friends. We will transition to electric vehicles as soon as practical.

#### **Travel - Air travel:**

In the future we may measure each persons air travel to measure our total carbon footprint if this is what the community is interested in doing.

### VIII. Lifestyle

#### Facilities, Diet, Health, Education, Spirituality

#### **Shared facilities**

She have common gardens, operational workshop and tools, dam, kitchen, lounge room, outdoor eating area, outdoor shower and fire pit.

#### **Internet access**

We have excellent speeds (50 down, 20 up) through 'fibre to the premises' (fixed IP business connection) NBN. We could pay for faster if we want. The internet is freely accessible for all residents and guests. We leave Wi-Fi on 24/7

#### **Mobile phone coverage**

The Telstra network works well, but the other networks are sketchy.

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Most residents use Aldi pre-paid plan (\$15 or \$25 a month)

### **Shared meals**

There is a shared meal offered every evening meals. It's not compulsory to attend all shared meals, however we have a cooking roster and a culture of shared evening meals.

### **Dietary preferences**

All shared meals are vegan. We eat simply and restrict packaged foods and sugar. We do come across reclaimed eggs and dairy, and they are sometimes incorporated into our diet. A meat and dairy free diet also helps with electricity use (refrigeration standards can be less).

We like to eat produce from our garden, and source local organic food.

If residents or visitors are gluten free, or have other dairy requirements, we are happy to accommodate.

Sometimes residents cook non-vegan elements for themselves.

### **Alcohol / drugs and tobacco**

This community has a culture of not using alcohol on site, though it's not specifically banned. Drunkenness is not tolerated.

We have agreed to have no tobacco or any smoking on site.

Illicit drugs are not permitted. We have no restriction on legal drugs however, we would welcome people relying less on such substances as caffeine and sugar. There is no restriction on medicinal drugs (as long as it doesn't violate our smoking preference).

### **Addictions:**

The community recognises that addictions are an illness often caused by a lack of human connection. We are concerned about negative uncontrolled addictions (substance abuse, gambling, etc) affecting the life of the community and will generally be unable to host people with negative uncontrolled addictions.

### **Spirituality**

We define ourselves as a spiritual community.

### **Sexuality**

This community is not based on any sexual preferences and is open to all.

### **Technology in shared spaces:**

We ask that we avoid personal devices in shared spaces, especially around meal time. We don't use TV's in shared spaces (apart from presentations or community movie nights). Screens in personal rooms are up to individuals.

### **Noise Levels**

We prefer people wear headphones rather than amplified music. We ask that noise levels generally be limited to 'standard' waking hours

### **Are domestic pets permitted:**

No animal ownership at all. Wildlife is the priority here.

### **Chemicals**

All grey water stays on the property. We don't use harsh cleaning chemicals. We prefer no artificial chemical fragrances. No sunscreen is allowed in dam or outside shower. Soap berries for clothes washing, organic shampoos and soaps only.

### **Drinking water**

We drink town water. We normally dechlorinate it first.

### **Tidiness**

Dishes are washed after every use and everything put away, benches wiped. We are careful to keep personal possessions out of communal areas.

### **Minimalism**

Minimalism is a key component of this community, Personal belonging and storage is limited to each residents' personal room. We do have limited storage in community shed.

We are going for a minimalist eco-aesthetic.

### **Security**

Minimal security, people are always around.

### **Time spent in community**

As we value connection. we prefer residents to make this village their 'principal place of residence'. When resident stop paying their weekly contribution, they need to make their space available.