

Life

by Hometown Australia

Spring 2023

Mastering the Art of Decluttering

Keep, bin or donate?
Downsizing without
the stress

Land Lease Communities vs. Retirement Villages

A comprehensive guide
to make an informed
choice

Lakeside Living on the Central Coast

Living the dream
on the spectacular
NSW Central Coast

Joint Managing Directors Message



Kevin Tucker



Stuart Strong

Welcome to the Spring edition of Life Magazine by Hometown Australia.

In this edition we examine the differences between land lease communities and retirement villages and hear from homeowners about why they enjoy living in a Hometown community.

We visit the NSW coastal town of Budgewoi and learn about the exciting developments taking place in the Lakeland community. We also discover more about the beautiful country town of Grafton which is home to the over 50's Hometown community, Jacaranda Grove.

2023 is the 20th birthday of the Seachange community in South Australia and we share some of the photos from the recent community celebrations marking this important anniversary.

Glenfern, our new community in Port Macquarie, has recently had a successful Open Day for visitors to see the newly completed display homes. We are also pleased that Glenfern has now had the first homeowners move into the new community.

Three of our major competitions finished up in July. The **Walk, Swim, Dance Across the World** competition had the participating homeowners

walking the equivalent of 120,003,007 steps – just shy of three times the circumference of the earth!

We also had the finals for the **State of Origin Bowling Competition** held at the Sunrise community in Port Stephens NSW. This is such a popular competition, and we look forward to more communities participating next year.

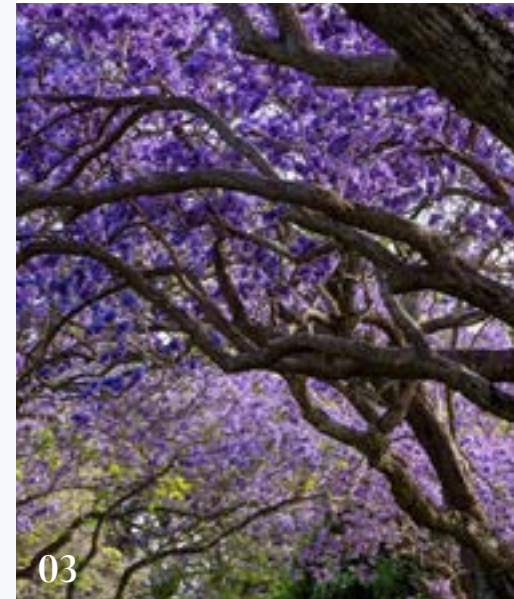
We were impressed with the quality of entries for the **Hometown Art Competition**. It was a difficult job for our judges to decide on a winner. We invite everyone to visit the [Hometown Art Competition](#) to see the 'virtual gallery' of artworks submitted in this year's competition. Congratulations to the winners and to everyone who entered this competition.

September marks the beginning of Spring and the commencement of our popular Hello Spring: Garden Competition. We are looking forward to seeing all the creative garden entries from proud gardeners across the communities and will be sharing the results in the summer edition of the magazine.

Kind regards,

Kevin Tucker *Stuart Strong*

Kevin Tucker & Stuart Strong
Joint Managing Directors



03



14



28

Contents

03	Grafton: A Top Choice for Downsizers	18	2023 Walk, Dance, Swim Competition a Runaway Success
07	First Homeowners Settle Into Glenfern	20	Four Coastal Homes for Sale
10	Lakeside Living on the Beautiful Central Coast	22	Navigating Downsizing: Lifestyle Communities vs. Retirement Villages
12	Seachange Community Celebrates 20 Years	24	What's Happening Around the Communities
13	Coming Soon: Hello Spring Garden Competition	26	Winners Revealed for the 2023 Hometown Art Competition
14	NSW Rolls to Victory in State of Origin Bowling Competition	28	Mastering the Art of Decluttering
16	Making the Leap to a Hometown Community	30	About Hometown Australia
		28	Refer a Friend for \$500

Grafton: A Top Choice for Downsizers



Grafton is renowned for its stunning Jacaranda trees that burst into a sea of purple blooms between October and November each year. It is also recognised as one of New South Wales' preferred retirement destinations for downsizers relocating from busier urban centers.



Grafton's Natural Delights

During Jacaranda season, the community comes together with parades, festivities, and market stalls. When it comes to natural attractions, Clarence Valley and the adjacent coastline offer parks, reserves, rivers, lakes, and beaches. Bushwalkers and cyclists of all ages will find plenty of places to explore. Hike along the Yuraygir Coastal Walk from Angourie or take the Iluka Forest Walking Track through lush rainforest and panoramic views. Bom Bom State Forest Mountain provides scenic bike trails suitable for cyclists of all levels.

Fishing and Water Sports

With direct access to some of New South Wales' largest and most spectacular rivers and lakes, there are many options available for fishing and water sports enthusiasts, from dragon boat racing and sailing to rowing regattas and the Bridge-to-Bridge Ski Race. Breathtaking beaches are scattered along the coast, with unique (and often 4WD accessible) spots just a 30-to-45-minute drive away.

Community and Culture

Grafton's museums, landmarks, and vibrant arts scene are major attractions for downsizers who appreciate history and culture. The town boasts beautiful National Trust-listed buildings and is a true heritage hotspot. The Grafton Heritage Trail offers a great way to explore local architectural marvels like the famous Bendy Bridge, the Gaol, and the Cathedral. The Grafton Regional Gallery hosts regular exhibitions, and the latest movie releases can be enjoyed at the historic Saraton Theatre.

Shopping and Dining

Grafton offers a wide range of eating options, including restaurants, cafes, bars, breweries, and pubs. The Ulmarra Hotel, a 15-minute drive out of town, exudes historic charm and features a popular beer garden. Fresh seasonal produce is available at the weekly Grafton Twilight Farmers Market. For other shopping needs, there are over 80 stores and specialty retailers in town.



Grafton's Jacaranda Grove: A New Lifestyle for the Over 50s

Located just minutes away from the center of Grafton, Jacaranda Grove is a lifestyle community tailored for people over 50. Whether retired, part-time, or fully employed, it's the perfect choice for downsizers looking to simplify their home and garden maintenance while connecting with like-minded neighbors in a secure and pet-friendly environment. Modern, open-plan two or three-bedroom homes with air conditioning and quality appliances are available, along with lifestyle features like entertaining decks, undercover carports, and on-site boat and caravan storage.

The clubhouse, community swimming pool, and BBQ area are ideal for socialising and forming new friendships. For residents with specialised medical needs, Grafton Hospital and Super Clinic are conveniently nearby, offering a full range of physiotherapy, occupational therapy, dietetics, diabetes care, and nursing services.



Recommendations from Happy Residents

Residents of Jacaranda Grove speak enthusiastically about the independence, camaraderie, and facilities the community provides. We asked a few of them to share their thoughts on community life.

Phillip and Karen, who have always lived in the area, are grateful they can downsize while staying close to family and friends. They enjoy the easier lifestyle and peaceful surroundings that having a home in Jacaranda Grove provides.

Peter and Jill value the convenience of being near Grafton Airport and a 2-hour drive away from the Gold Coast. Exploring the area on weekend driving trips is a favorite pastime, and they appreciate the flexibility to be as social as they like without feeling overwhelmed.

Michael loves the shared facilities, friendly people, and the convenience of having a wide range of shops and retail options at his fingertips. He also enjoys driving to other destinations like Coffs Harbour and the Gold Coast.

Discover [Jacaranda Grove's brand-new homes](#) today or get in touch with our sales team at 02 9055 8674. Content created in partnership with [Downsizing.com.au](#).

First Homeowners Settle into Glenfern



On the 22nd of July, the public was invited to the Glenfern Display Homes Open Day. Over 200 people turned out to view the newly completed display homes, enjoy great food and music, and meet the new team.

We received plenty of positive feedback about the floor plans, the open feeling, and natural light in the living areas, as well as the quality of the finishes. The first homeowners moved into the community in July and were recently joined by Narelle and Ken. Narelle is delighted with their new home.

"I was overwhelmed when we first arrived at our new home in Glenfern. I was so impressed with the quality of everything. It was so modern and beautiful. There were even features I wasn't expecting to find. The fit-out in the walk-in wardrobe was just what we needed – I had thought we might need to install shelves, etc. The storage in the home is great, and there was nothing that we needed to do."

Narelle
Homeowner at Glenfern, Port Macquarie

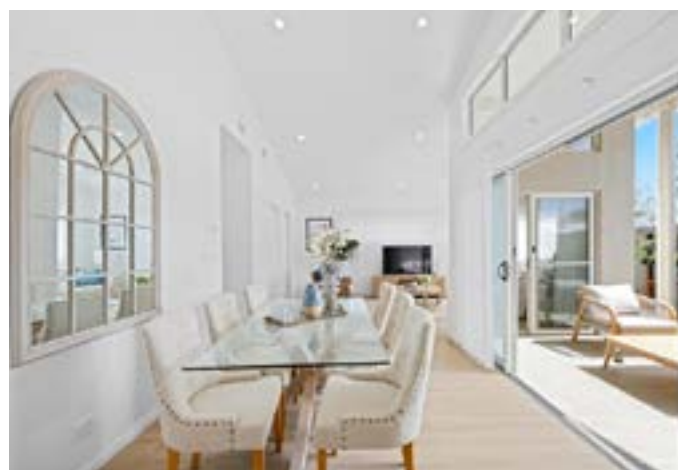
Glenfern's newly completed display homes provide a preview of the quality homes available for purchase in this stunning location.

Each home has been designed to create a sense of light and space with high ceilings and open design living areas. The four display homes have a contemporary and elegant country feel, reflecting the design of Glenfern's modern style clubhouse and facilities.



Shelley

With raked ceilings and dormer windows the first impression of the Shelley is of a bright and welcoming home. With a well-designed kitchen, open plan living area and a spacious alfresco area, this home is perfect for entertaining family and friends. The master bedroom has a walk-in wardrobe and an attractive modern ensuite bathroom. There is a comfortable guest bedroom with a built-in robe and separate bathroom and a flexible space that could be used as a study or additional quiet space.



Blue Gum

The fresh and light interiors of Blue Gum have an elegant country feel with accents of wood and earthy tones. This attractive open plan home has comfortable and spacious living areas with an abundance of natural light. The well-appointed kitchen and alfresco area are perfect for entertaining. The master bedroom has a walk-in robe and an oversized ensuite. The guest bedroom has a built-in wardrobe and access to another beautiful bathroom. Practical features include the inclusion of a study area, double garage, an internal laundry and plenty of storage throughout.



Watonga

Watonga is designed for people who want a comfortable home without sacrificing space and style. The open plan living area has raked ceilings and dormer windows flooding the area with light. There is an outdoor entertaining space and a well-equipped kitchen. The king-sized master suite has a walk-in robe and ensuite and the guest bedroom has a built-in robe and separate bathroom. A beautiful home designed with extra touches including an internal laundry and abundant storage.



Flame Tree

This appealing home has open and spacious light-filled living areas enhanced by raked ceilings and dormer windows. Flame Tree has a fresh, modern country feel with a light and natural colour palette. The kitchen has quality appliances and abundant storage opening on to a large alfresco entertaining area. The master bedroom has a walk-in robe and large ensuite. The guest bedroom has a built-in robe and access to a second bathroom. Designed for comfortable and practical living there is also the inclusion of a multi-purpose room for use as a study or craft area.

Additional home models are available, including custom options and two-story designs with internal lift. Please call our team on **02 7255 2900** to book a tour, or visit [Glenfern's website page](#) to find out more.

Lakeside Living on the Beautiful Central Coast



Budgewoi is a charming little town encircled by waterways on the Central Coast of NSW. Budgewoi Lake is a beloved spot for various activities such as swimming, fishing, surfing, kayaking, boating, and stand-up paddleboarding. For those eager to immerse themselves in the region's diverse wildlife and impressive vegetation, the 1 km Budgewoi Beach Dunecare Circuit Walk beckons. This circuit walk consists of well-maintained paths and handcrafted timber boardwalks that meander through the rejuvenated wetlands leading to the beach.



Lakeland, a tranquil over-50s community, sits along the shores of Budgewoi Lake, within easy walking distance of local beaches. This long-established and pet-friendly community lies beside the waterfront promenade that stretches from Budgewoi Lake to San Remo. Residents delight in the bushland setting and frequent visits from local birds and wildlife. There are numerous opportunities to forge friendships through regular community activities, and a community bus offers homeowners the chance for weekly shopping trips, lunches, and more.

Lakeland's homeowners eagerly await the completion of impressive development work currently underway within the community. The new community clubhouse is scheduled for completion in December. This modern facility will serve as a hub for the community, featuring amenities such as a gym, pool table, library nook, kitchen, and a bar with views overlooking the upcoming swimming pool. The plans also encompass the construction of an outdoor pergola, complete with a kitchen/BBQ area and seating with picturesque water views.



An additional alfresco dining area will be situated nearby, and the construction of the pool is set to commence shortly.

In the coming year, Lakeland community will also welcome new homeowners, with an additional 10 homes set to be built. The first two homes are currently under construction. These homes will feature two bedrooms and parking space for one vehicle. Eight more homes are slated for delivery in 2024, offering two bedrooms, a study, and room for parking for two vehicles.

Budgewoi's convenient location is a 90-minute drive to Sydney and an effortless 40-minute drive to the Hunter Valley.

For more detailed information, please visit the [Lakeland webpage](#).



Seachange Community Celebrates 20 Years

Seachange, a friendly Hometown Australia retirement community for over 50's, is located in the picturesque town of Goolwa, South Australia. This year marks a significant milestone as the Seachange community celebrates its 20th birthday!

After a week of enthusiastic preparations, the much-anticipated 20th birthday party finally arrived, drawing over 170 people from Seachange to partake in the festivities.

The celebrations commenced with a heartfelt speech from Community Manager Kerry, extending a warm welcome to all attendees. She also expressed her pride in Seachange and her excitement for the community's future. A special guest at the event was Jim Orken, the founder of Seachange, who joined in the celebrations.

The highlight of the event was the Seachange Quiz, providing a fun opportunity for residents to test their knowledge of the village. To maintain the festive spirit, the South Australian Police Band played toe-tapping music for the next hour.

Community Manager Kerry and Josie, a resident of Seachange for 20 years, came together to cut a large birthday cake. The atmosphere in the community center was heartwarming, as everyone enjoyed catching up over slices of cake and cups of tea.



Seachange is a thoughtfully designed, pet-friendly community located just a short stroll away from the beach and the majestic Murray River.

For more information about Seachange, please [visit their webpage](#).



Coming Soon!

Hello Spring: Garden Competition

Attention green thumbs! The Hometown Australia Spring Garden Competition returns this September. All residents are welcome to join in the fun and express yourself through your garden or a garden within your community.

How to Enter

Enter your garden by submitting a registration form to your Community Manager.

Would you like to tell us about your garden?

Perhaps you have a special plant or a unique garden sculpture? We would love to hear about it! Please include this as part of your application.

Keep an eye out for registration forms coming soon. The Spring Competition will run from 4 September – 13 October 2023. Winners will be announced shortly after. Please contact your Community Manager for further information.



Do you have Facebook?

Be sure to follow Hometown Australia!

hometownaustralia.com.au



CATEGORIES & PRIZES

\$100	Community Finalist for Best Resident Garden Each Community will select a Best Resident Garden. Finalists will be entered into the National Competition and awarded \$100.
\$200	Winner of the National Competition for Best Resident Garden Each Community finalist will be entered into the National Competition and the overall winner will be awarded \$200
\$300	Winner of National Competition for Best Community Garden One lucky Community will be awarded Best Community Garden and receive \$300 for their community social fund



NSW Rolls to Victory in State of Origin Bowling Competition



2023 marks the second year of Hometown Australia's State of Origin Bowling Competition, and we are delighted to see its increasing popularity among Hometown communities. Much like the Rugby League's State of Origin, this competition pits teams from NSW against those from QLD in a battle to determine the 2023 champion state.

Beyond being a competitive event, it serves as a fun way for people to connect with fellow homeowners who share a passion for bowls from various communities and states. The Finals took place at the Sunrise Community in Port Stephens, NSW, where QLD players arrived on Friday evening for a meet-and-greet session. They were all presented with their shirts for the following day and then retired for a good night's sleep at Birubi Beach Holiday Park.

On Saturday morning teams arrived bright and early, taking to the green for a practice roll-up before enjoying a hearty breakfast of bacon and eggs. The official proceedings of the day began with a briefing from the Sunrise Bowls Committee, followed by an address to the players and the growing crowd of supporters by Glenn Page from Hometown. Player introductions and cap presentations followed suit. The National Anthem was beautifully sung by the Sunrise band and singers, setting the stage for the first bowl of the day.



It proved to be an outstanding day of bowls, with all games tightly contested. However, the highlight of the day undoubtedly was the mixed pairs event, which had everyone on the edge of their seats. Throughout the game, NSW trailed QLD, and it was the final bowl by Kevin H (Beachfront, NSW) that secured the victory for NSW, snatching the game from QLD.

Congratulations to all the players for making this event a resounding success. However, there can be only one winner, and the ultimate bragging rights go to NSW!

Organising the Hometown Australia State of Origin Bowls event is no small feat, and we extend our heartfelt thanks to the players, supporters, and Community Managers. Their dedication was evident as they not only supported their players by driving them to events but also coordinated games between communities and cheered passionately from the sidelines.





Making the Leap to a Hometown Community

Choosing to downsize from the family home and transition to an over 50s community is a significant step. We spoke with several homeowners from around Australia to gain insight into their experiences of living in a Hometown community.



"We lived in northern Italy for a few years and loved the village life. Returning to Australia we found it difficult settling back in, and so we moved many times searching for what we had back in Europe".

After Salvino was made redundant from his workplace in Sydney, Robyn suggested they take a 'Seniors' Gap Year' travelling around Australia in their caravan. They discovered Seachange in Goolwa, South Australia. They are happy that Seachange captures the village lifestyle they were searching for.

Some of their friends and relatives commented that they were too young to move into Seachange. However, being an active over 50s community means that it is more about lifestyle, and less about age. "It is refreshing and peaceful at the same time, giving each resident a sense of security as together our participation helps to maintain this beautiful sanctuary and helps those who might feel the world has become too fast, too insensitive, and too foreign."



"We didn't expect life to begin again like it has."

We enjoy all the social events held in our Community Centre, from playing darts and pool, to the Friday afternoon get togethers. The swimming pool is a great place to be social and exercise at the same time."

Denis and Glynis, Grevillea Waters, Yamba, NSW

"We moved from Tasmania to be closer to family members. We found that community living suits our needs. We love the interaction with other residents, and are involved with the social committee and the fishing club. We enjoy happy hour and the community bus trips."

Gary and Anne, Snappy Gums, Sussex Inlet, NSW



"Coming from suburbia to a Hometown Community was the best decision we ever made."

We enjoy the feeling of belonging, and have been very involved with the Residents Committee. We have great neighbours and regularly get together for BBQ's to celebrate special occasions and birthdays."

Hazel and Ted, Jacaranda Grove, Grafton, NSW





2023 Walk, Swim, Dance Competition A Runaway Success



Increasing daily steps is a practical way to maintain a healthy lifestyle, particularly as we age. At Hometown Australia, we encourage homeowners to challenge themselves through our annual Walk, Dance, Swim Competition.

Over a three-month period, participants keep track of their daily steps from walking, or equivalent activities like swimming or dancing. At the end of the competition period, we tally the total steps taken by participants across Australia. Last year, we successfully surpassed our goal of collectively walking across Australia. This year, our aim was even more ambitious - to cover the distance equivalent to circumnavigating the Earth, which is approximately 40,075 kilometers!

The challenge officially commenced on March 1st, with participating Hometown communities forming teams, choosing catchy team names, and diligently recording the number of steps or equivalents achieved through various activities such as walking, swimming, cycling, Zumba, and dancing.

Community groups wholeheartedly embraced the competition, with teams engaging in activities like



aqua aerobics and rock 'n' roll classes to rack up their step counts. Every fortnight, the nominated team captain converted the team's achievements into steps using an online tool called MoveSpring.

At the conclusion of the three-month competition, it was time to tally the results. But the big question was: Did we accumulate enough steps to walk around the world?

Yes we did! In fact, the Hometown communities accomplished a staggering 91,466 kilometers (equivalent to 120,003,007 steps), which is almost three times the Earth's circumference (40,075 kilometers)! This result was nothing short of amazing, and all participating teams should be immensely proud of their remarkable achievements.



A round of applause goes to the winners of the 2023 Walk, Swim, Dance Across the World Competition:

1st Place:

Edgewalkers from Edgewater, QLD, who walked an impressive 22,540,300 steps, earned their community social club a well-deserved \$300 gift card.

2nd Place:

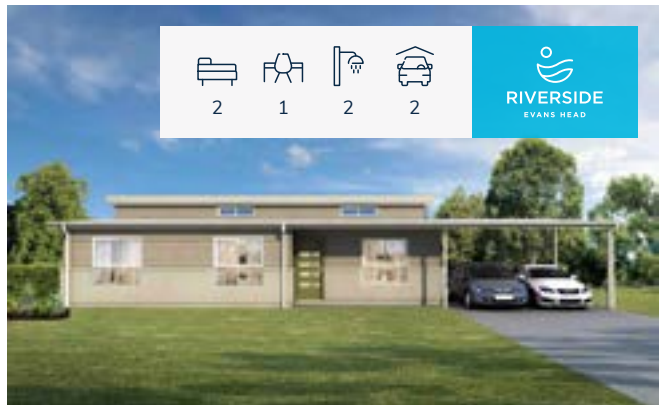
Sunrise Strutters from Hunter, NSW, with a total of 21,216,964 steps, secured the 2nd position and were awarded a \$200 gift card for their community social club.

3rd Place:

Grevillea Gallopers from NSW North Coast, with 16,637,796 steps, took the 3rd spot and received a \$100 gift card for their community social club. We introduced this third-place award this year in recognition of the tremendous surge in interest in this event.

It was truly heartening to witness so many people come together, engage in physical activity, have fun, and form new friendships. We hope to see even more communities join in the next year's competition.

Four Beautiful Coastal Homes For Sale



Riverside - Evans Head, NSW

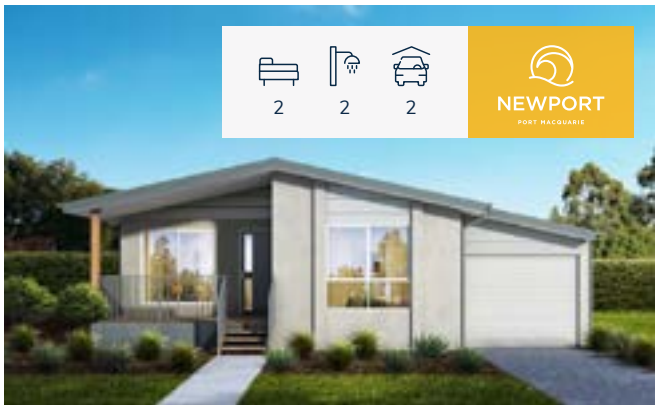
Riverside Hometown community is surrounded by National Parks, stunning coastline, peaceful gardens and connected to the centre of town by a scenic walking track.

Custom designed home

This is the perfect home for those who enjoy entertaining. It includes open plan living with the dining & living room flowing onto the outdoor alfresco area. The kitchen is complete with quality features and boasts a walk-in pantry.

Features

- Study nook
- Additional bathroom
- Separate laundry room
- Outdoor alfresco area
- Double carport



Newport - Port Macquarie, NSW

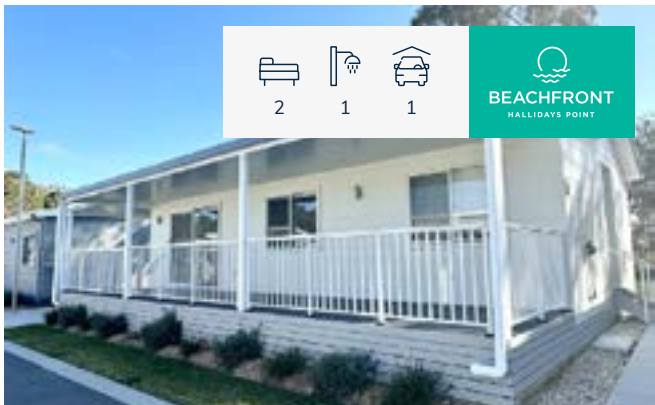
With 17 beaches and the Hastings River in Port Macquarie, you'll enjoy adventures and fresh air by the water. The mid-north coast also makes it easy to explore the local Sea Acres National Park, or access shops, clubs, cafes and medical facilities.

Jarrah II

Step inside the Jarrah II and discover the kind of practical luxury that defines living. The Jarrah II's large rear deck has column-less corner sliding doors which creates open living at its best. And a sitting room is ideal for a number of different purposes, study, home office or media room.

Features

- Timber flooring
- Undercover carport
- Fully landscaped
- Internal & external finishes
- Double blinds throughout



Beachfront - Hallidays Point, NSW

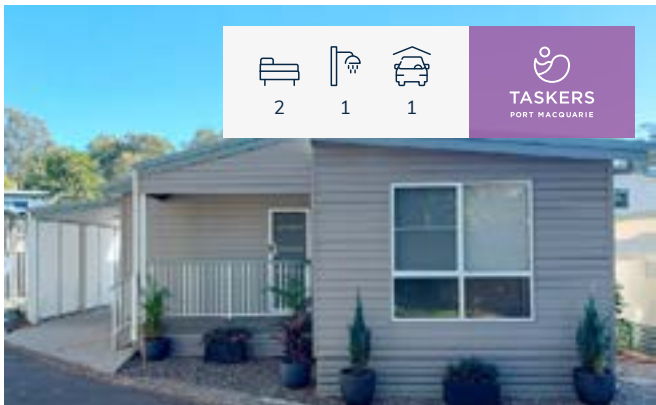
Halliday's Point is a pretty, peaceful seaside haven set in the Manning Valley region of the North Coast, just 20 minutes north of Forster.

The Sands

The Sands is a brand new modern 2-bedroom home with separate light filled living and dining areas with a generous kitchen that includes a walk-in pantry, perfect for downsizers looking for a low-maintenance lifestyle. Take in the morning sun with a coffee on the large east facing verandah and enjoy the afternoon summer sea breeze as you listen to the sounds of the Ocean.

Features

- Built in wardrobes
- Stainless steel appliances
- Air-conditioner & ceiling fans
- Double blinds
- Fully landscaped



Taskers - Port Macquarie, NSW

Located in the coastal town of Port Macquarie this area is ideal for people who enjoy the outdoors lifestyle surrounded by nature. Imagine taking a morning stroll along the best-voted beaches in the world before stopping in at one of your local cafes.

Your brand new home is conveniently located a short stroll to beautiful Flynns Beach, shops, restaurants, a medical centre, and a post office.

Custom designed home

This light and bright home features beautiful high ceilings, a modern kitchen, complemented by a spacious living/dining. Enjoy a generous master with your own north-facing private deck.

Features

- Spacious design
- Low maintenance gardens
- 700m to Flynns Beach



Navigating Downsizing: Lifestyle Communities vs. Retirement Villages

Deciding on your next move? We break down the differences between land lease lifestyle communities and retirement villages.



Opting to downsize from your family home to a smaller, more affordable, and manageable residence can be an emotionally charged decision. In today's diverse landscape of downsizing options, making an informed choice is crucial. Lifestyle communities and traditional retirement villages vary in several ways, and we've highlighted some of these differences below:

Understanding Land Lease Living

Lifestyle communities are also referred to as Land Lease Living communities. This means that residents own their homes and enter into a long-term lease for the land they occupy. Hometown Australia's communities offer exceptional value for money without the high entry and exit fees commonly associated with traditional retirement living choices. Both new and pre-loved homes are available for sale, catering to various needs and budgets. New homes are designed thoughtfully for over 50s, emphasising low maintenance, quality, space, and security within the community.

Independent Living in a Land Lease Community

Lifestyle communities provide a secure, friendly environment with amenities that encourage an active, engaged, and healthy lifestyle. The good news is that over 50s land lease communities aren't just for retirees; some residents are in a transitional phase, moving from full-time to part-time work as they prepare for retirement.

Financial Considerations

When deciding between a lifestyle community and a retirement village, it's essential to examine the financial aspects of each option:

Other Charges

Retirement villages typically impose a general service charge, covering village maintenance, facilities, rates, and sometimes home upkeep. In land lease communities, homeowners pay a weekly site fee, encompassing rates, landscaping, road maintenance, community facilities, and administrative costs. Qualifying for a government

pension may entitle homeowners to Commonwealth Rent Assistance, which can be offset against site fees. This is not applicable for retirement villages.

Exit Fees

Retirement village residents might face exit fees or "deferred management fees" accrued over time when selling their homes. In land lease communities, no exit fees are levied.

Capital Gains

In retirement villages, you may be required to share part or all of the capital gain with the village's operators upon selling your property. However, in a land lease community, homeowners retain 100% of the capital gains from the sale of their homes.

In addition to exceptional amenities, beautifully landscaped grounds, and welcoming communities, moving to a Hometown Australia land lease community also makes excellent financial sense!

The benefits of land lease



No stamp duty



No council rates



Retain capital gains



No exit fees



What's Happening Around the Communities

A Little Ray of Sunrise

A group of Sunrise residents have united to make and collect items for children in need from newborns to late teens. These items will then be distributed by Gifts of Hope at Christmas time. This group (including the Men's Shed and craft groups) formed to help those in need and encourage community members to share knowledge, skills and ideas, and socialising while they are at it. Throughout the year they look out for items on sale, and they are stored in members homes until the Gifts of Hope Christmas Appeal opens later in the year.

They also collect items for Hope in a Suitcase, providing essential items for children going into foster care. This sends a message of hope – and gives them a sense of being worthy and cared for by the community.

Grevillea Waters Cancer Care Committee

This year the Grevillea Waters Cancer Care Committee raised \$12,000 for the Grafton and Lismore Hospital's Cancer Care Units. The Committee support Cancer Care by helping fund items to improve patient care including improved entertainment/call buzzers for chemotherapy chairs, pillows, and lap blankets. In June the committee received a Community Recognition Statement from the Member for Clarence acknowledging their fundraising efforts. Well done to the Committee for the events and raffles they've run to raise this huge sum.



Nepean Shores Community fundraising

Throughout the year the Nepean Shores social committee organises donations of groceries, toiletries and toys from community residents for local charity WestCare Penrith. WestCare distributes these items to people struggling in the community or affected by floods, fires etc. The craft ladies also get together on Tuesdays to make blankets, jumpers etc. to help families in need. We applaud the Nepean Shores community for their kindness and community spirit. Well done everyone!



Elvis is alive and well and performing on the NSW South Coast

The sold-out Elvis Show was organised by the social committee at the Dunes, Sussex Inlet. With so many homeowners from Snappy Gums and the Dunes in attendance they needed a bigger venue, so everyone gathered at the Snappy Gums Community Centre to see 'the King'. It was a fun night with everyone feeling 'all shook up' during his two-hour show.

Christmas in July

The Newport Social Club organised a fabulous 'Christmas in July' event for homeowners in Port Macquarie and contributed almost \$2,000 towards the 123 meals served on the day. After a delicious meal, raffle prizes were distributed and everyone joined in for a Christmas trivia quiz organised by Wendy, the Newport trivia queen. The winners were a team called, rather appropriately, the Smarty Pants. Denise created clubhouse and table decorations to create a festive feel and plenty of homeowners were on hand to help out throughout the event.



Sunrise musicians

The 'Tequila Sunrise Band' and 'The Margarita Singers' were formed by Sunrise residents keen to rediscover their love of music. Members found that rehearsing and performing provides social opportunities to help "find their niche" within the Community.

The groups have performed at Anzac Days, Australia Days, Carols by Candlelight, the State of Origin Bowls Competition and the Regis Nursing Home. In November they will appear at the local Music on the Green. The Tequila Sunrise Band also recently had an international gig - in Thailand! They played in a Thai bar, a great night of singing and dancing!



Teraglin's Craft Ladies

The craft ladies at Teraglin have been busy knitting and raising money to support local charities. With money raised by the craft ladies from stalls selling their handmade items they purchased just under \$1,000 of pyjamas, track pants, nappies, socks, underwear and toiletries. These were donated along with 40 handmade knitted jumpers and blankets to We Care Coast. Congratulations, we are all proud of your efforts!



Winners Revealed for the 2023 Hometown Art Competition

Each year, Hometown Australia homeowners are encouraged to showcase their skills and submit their artworks and crafted items across a range of mediums for the annual Hometown Art Competition.

We were highly impressed with the quality of entries received for the 2023 Art Competition, making the task of our judges difficult as they deliberated over their decisions. This year featured three distinct categories: the finest artwork within each community, the standout artwork within a region, and a national prize.

Congratulations to the competition winners:

Queensland Region Winner

'Kookaburra' - acrylic painting by Linda from Redlands



Hunter Region Winner:

'Meindee Dreaming' - oil painting by Irene at Homestead.

Irene shared, "I'd like to thank Hometown for selecting my painting 'Meindee Dreaming' as the winner for both the Homestead and Regional entries. It was a great thrill! I intend to use the \$200 prize to purchase paints, brushes, and other supplies – once again, thank you!"

North Coast Region Winner

Rocking Horse by Larry from Laurieton

Larry's rocking horse was meticulously handcrafted from radiata pine, featuring a mane and tail made of real horse hair. The strapping and saddle were fashioned from leather, while the horse's glass eyes



and other accessories were meticulously crafted from either brass or chrome.

Sydney and South Winner

'Thirsty' by Beth from Rosetta. 'Thirsty' also received the award for **Best National Artwork**.

Beth shared, "For this painting, I employed oil on canvas as the medium. The impulse to paint it struck me after I had encountered the image in a magazine photo. The lovely colors, reflections, and sense of innocence and liberation that the image conveyed inspired me. It was a wonderful piece to create, and I am both thankful and proud that it was chosen."



Virtual Gallery:

Given the multitude of fantastic entries this year, we decided to establish a 'virtual gallery' on our website where everyone can admire the artworks. We encourage you to follow [this link](#) to witness the caliber of entries we received.

Community Exhibition:

In Lennox Head, NSW, the Sanctuary community organized a 'Winter Art Sip n See' event to showcase the exceptional artworks created by their members. The event attracted a significant audience, complete with tunes from the Lennox Minstrels, delicious platters of nibbles, and glasses of OJ and fizz. A delightful afternoon was enjoyed by all.





Mastering the Art of Decluttering

Moving from a home you may have lived in for many years can be a monumental task. However, downsizing can open up a world of exciting possibilities. The first step is to begin decluttering your home.

To make the transition to your dream home smoother and less stressful, it's advisable to bring only the items you truly need and cherish. Here are a few key ideas to keep in mind while decluttering:

Start Early: Start the process well in advance. Your newly uncluttered home will appear more spacious and appealing to potential buyers.

Room-by-Room: To avoid feeling overwhelmed, tackle one room at a time (and one cupboard or drawer at a time). This approach will provide you with a sense of accomplishment and motivation to continue.

Dispose of Broken or Worn Items: Don't hold onto anything that is broken or heavily worn, even if you once intended to repair it.

Kitchen Appliances: Discard seldom-used, bulky

kitchen appliances. These can be sold or donated to charity shops that accept electrical goods. Grandchildren setting up new homes may also appreciate any extra kitchenware you have.

Clothing Cull: Sort your clothing into three categories:

- Keep items that you genuinely love, find comfortable, fit well, and wear regularly.
- Donate clothing that is in good condition but no longer needed to a charity shop.
- Discard stained or damaged items that are unsuitable for donation.

Sentimental Items and Collections: Parting with sentimental items and collections can be challenging. If you're uncertain about keeping an item, assess whether it brings you joy, holds family significance, or can be repurposed into something

useful. If not, consider passing it on to a family member or donating it to a charity shop.

Managing Photos: Photos can occupy a significant amount of space in your home. To kickstart the decluttering process:

- Discard duplicates and those you no longer wish to keep.
- Consider alternative storage options, such as uploading photos to a digital photo frame that displays images on rotation, often with ample internal storage.
- Use an external hard drive.
- Store photos on a cloud-based service for secure access from your computer.
- Frame your favorite photos.
- Create a photo book featuring your cherished images for your coffee table.

In the journey of downsizing and decluttering, you're not just shedding possessions; you're making room for a new chapter in your life filled with possibilities and newfound freedom. By focusing on what truly matters and letting go of the rest, you'll not only create a more manageable living space but also embark on a path to a simpler, more fulfilling lifestyle.

