

Crystal Waters - Permaculture Village

📍 Location - Queensland, Australia, north of Brisbane



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🌍 Vision and Origin

- Founded in 1987, Crystal Waters was the world's first permaculture-designed village, the village is shaped by this permaculture framework
- Primary goal was to demonstrate that sustainable human settlement could regenerate the land, support livelihoods, and build strong community ties

★ Key Facts About Community

- 🌍 Population: ~250 residents of all ages and backgrounds
- 🧱 Residential Lots: 83 individually owned, each approx. 1 acre
- 🌳 Common Land: ~500 acres held in shared ownership
- 🏠 Eco Homes: mudbrick, rammed earth, straw bale and solar systems
- 💧 Water Systems: 17 swales and dams - for catchment and irrigation
- 🎓 Education: permaculture design courses, workshops, and eco events

Sustainability Highlights

-  **Land Regeneration:** Once degraded cattle pasture, the land is now rich with biodiversity, forests, and wildlife habitats. Pet-free policy protects native species including kangaroos, wallabies, and birdlife.
-  **Water Management:** Swales and dams designed to harvest rainwater, prevent erosion, and irrigate crops. Composting toilets and greywater systems reduce water waste.
-  **Energy and Waste:** Most homes use solar power, solar hot water, and rely on natural ventilation. Minimal reliance on external energy systems and no central sewage - encouraging closed-loop systems.
-  **Food Systems:** Residents grow their own food using organic and permaculture practices. Shared enterprises include bamboo groves, organic gardens, food forest systems, and community-supported agriculture (CSA).

Lifestyle

- A simple, community-oriented lifestyle, focused on low impact living
 - Organic gardening and food preservation are priority
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- Local art, music, and cultural events and monthly village markets on the Village Green (live music, crafts, local produce)
 - Home-based businesses include sourdough bakery, natural building, eco-tourism and education
 - Social activities range from film nights, yoga classes and shared meals to working bees
 - Residents live with the seasons, work with nature, and value time, relationships, and ecological stewardship over material consumption

Governance Structure

- Governed by 2 legal bodies 1) Corporate Body 2) Community Cooperative, together, these systems ensure local autonomy, shared decision-making, and a balance between personal freedom and community responsibility.
- Corporate Body: Oversees the residential lots, internal roads, dams, and other shared infrastructure, handles regulations, design codes, and community standards. All lot owners are automatically members.
- Community Cooperative: Manages the commercial hub (café, bakery, markets), event venues, and the Eco Park (visitor accommodations), facilitates community events, workshops, and external partnerships. Open to residents and non-residents.



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In Closing.....

With over 35 years of success, Crystal Waters serves as a global inspiration and a model for future ecovillages, eco-developments, and land regeneration projects.

References

<https://crystalwaters.org.au/>