

STINA KERANS, DEAN OF SCHOOL

# The School of Village Making

*The village is the campus.*

A school that teaches the Sun Villages Institute Model and all the Institute's work, on live villages, with the people who live in them.

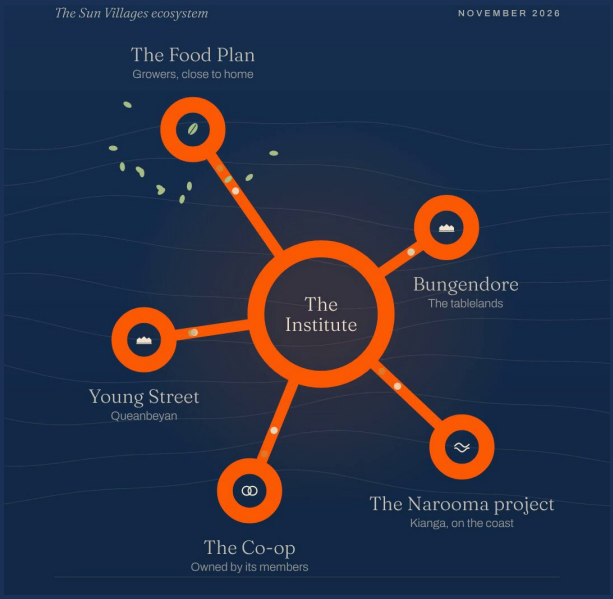
FOUNDING YEAR 2027

Cover: illustration of the village idea, not a design of any site.

01 · THE ECOSYSTEM

# One mark, six parts

The Sun Villages Institute sits at the centre of a small network of villages, growers and a member-owned co-operative. The School of Village Making is how the Institute teaches the method to the whole network.




## The Institute

The education centre. Fifty years of work, held in trust and given away. It licenses and certifies each village.

## Young Street, Queanbeyan

The first village. One title, never divided.

## Bungendore, the tablelands

A trading village on the local exchange.

## The Narooma project, Kianga

A coast homestead coming into the model.

## The Food Plan

Growers close to home join through the exchange and sell at the weekly market.

## The Co-op

Owned by its members. Shares first, no bank debt, community sourced finance. It invests only in licensed villages, by member vote.

TOGETHER

### The Institute teaches the method. The villages build it. Growers feed it. The co-op holds it.

The Living Places Institute leads research and Story of Place. The LETS is the shared exchange that links every part.

# So the model outlives its founders

The Sun Villages Institute Model was designed as an open pattern, taught the way permaculture and Steiner schools are taught, so any group can apply it anywhere. For fifty years it has lived in the people who built it. The school turns it into a practice that is taught, recorded and handed on.

| Need | Why it matters | What the school does |
|---|---|---|
| Handing it on | Fifty years of practice live in Stina, Garry and the people around them. A book records the ideas. A school passes on the craft. | A taught, recorded practice, and a second generation of teachers. |
| More villages | The model is an open pattern, not a single project. Every new village strengthens the whole network. | Trains the groups who will build the next villages. |
| The licence | Each village joins the network in four stages: Affiliate, Candidate, Licensed and Certified. | Makes the learning pathway and the licence pathway the same path. |
| Learning together | People who want to build villages ask to learn from finished projects, alongside others doing the same. | Cohorts built on real projects, with every lesson written back into the course. |
| Research | The Living Places Institute links the villages to research and to universities. | A program research partners can join and learn from. |

*“Why can't the building itself be a centre for regeneration?” Stina Kerans*



*Illustration of the village idea, not a design of any site.*

03 · THE CURRICULUM

# The Sun Villages Institute Model, in six strands

| Strand | What is taught | Where it is taught |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Why housing matters | Housing as root cause. Social sustainability first. Belonging, not shelter. Grass roots, not charity. | Foundations of Village Making |
| 2. The three design principles | Architecture that expands and contracts. Density within 300 m of a hub. A hub with at least a cafe. | Building for Belonging |
| 3. The money | Shares and community lending in place of bank and developer. No bank debt. Never subdivide, never sell. Returns capped and indexed to wages. Dividends offset the lease. | No Bank Debt Development; Patient Capital |
| 4. The village economy | Two currencies. The SUN on the LETS. Work in the village. Local first. The lessons of the Qbees exchange: about 20 members to start, about 200 at most, and always a broker. | The Village Economy |
| 5. Land, water, energy | The node pattern. Carrying capacity set by the water cycle. Perimeter commons and farmer leases. A closed water cycle. Village energy. | Reading Place; Water and the Village; Feeding the Village |
| 6. Life cycle and care | The entirement village. Elders as weavers of the social fabric. Children who watch and imitate in the workshop barn. Care at village scale. | Foundations; the Teaching Circle |

# Taught from the source

Every program starts from the Sun Villages Institute Model as set out in Stina Kerans' *Can't Buy Property?* and the Outline for 2026. The school teaches the model, tests it in the field and records what the field teaches back.

*"Real security is not the amount of money you have in the bank. It is the number of people you are connected to within walking distance." Stina Kerans*

**LIVE QUESTIONS ARE PART OF THE COURSE**

Some parts of the model are still being worked out in practice: homes that grow and shrink with a household, leases that last for generations, how a village saves for its long-term upkeep, and how shares change hands fairly. Each cohort takes one live question as its project, and what it finds goes back into the model. A school that learns from its own villages keeps the model honest.

## Where the teaching comes from

| Source | What it gives the school |
|---|---|
| *Can't Buy Property?* and the Outline for 2026 (Stina Kerans) | The core: the principles, the three design principles, the money and the village economy. |
| The Sun Villages Model principles (2026) | The six strands, and the live questions each cohort works on. |
| The Sun Villages Model Licence and the co-op principles (2026) | The eight licence principles, the four-stage pathway and the criteria the school prepares people for. |
| Living Places Institute methodology | A 12-week, six-phase, 16-step method for reading a place, with pre-reading and a workshop for every phase; five practitioner roles; six value streams; four integrative design workshops; a lessons register for every role. |
| Cohort learning and an open library (2024) | Cohort learning built on finished projects with redo reviews, and an open library of what the network learns. |
| The building as a learning centre (2024) | Stina's idea of the whole building as a place of learning: rooms for visiting researchers, lecture and film space, a bushland research station. |
| An ecosystem of value (2024) | Each project becomes a course. Work is valued in more than money. |
| Each place its own form (2025) | Each place chooses its own form. The licence sets principles, not one structure. |
| The LETS, the Food Lab, the Food Plan and the films (2026) | Live programs and live sites to teach on now. Each has its own section in this document. |

04 · THE LICENCE

# Eight principles, taught and licensed

These are the principles of the Sun Villages Model Licence. The Sun Villages Co-operative has adopted the same principles by member vote. Every program teaches them, and every village is licensed against them.

| Principle | What it means |
|---|---|
| 1. Social first | Homes sit close to a shared hub with a cafe. Flexible boundaries, a mix of life stages, and daily contact built into the design. |
| 2. Held, not sold | Each village is one title with one owner. No strata or unit subdivision. The constitution locks in against sale and subdivision. |
| 3. Shares first, then patient capital | Villages are built and held through shares. Any further funding is community lending on protective terms, never from banks. |
| 4. A lease, not a tenancy | Residents hold long, inheritable leases with owner-like rights, backed by a minimum shareholding. |
| 5. Wages, not markets | Lease fees and capped returns track wages, not market prices. Home prices and investment prices are kept separate. |
| 6. Community sourced finance | Funds are released only against quantity surveyor certificates. A minimum raise is set before money is taken. Everyone gets the same terms. |
| 7. The exchange | Every village joins the LETS from the start. Volunteer hours are recorded, a paid broker is engaged, and limits apply in both directions. |
| 8. The network | Shares can change hands through a lawful route. Asset value and yield are published. Lease offsets work between villages. |

ABOVE ALL EIGHT

No promise of return or liquidity, and an honest public record of what is done, what is under way and what is not yet done.

## Patient capital, protected

- Never from banks or lenders whose core business is secured property lending
- No power of sale; repayment only from surplus
- No acceleration on missed payments
- Converts to shares if deferral runs too long
- Returns capped at the shareholder return
- No veto over budgets, leases, fees or works

## How the co-op uses the licence

- Invests only in villages built to the Model Licence
- Every investment goes to a member vote
- Written facts circulated three weeks before each vote
- One membership, one vote

Nothing in this document is an offer of shares or an invitation to invest. Any offer is made only through formal documents, to people who request them.

# Stina Kerans



*Environmental developer and author. Designing village-scale settlement models for long-term stewardship.*

Stina has worked as a social entrepreneur since 1976. She created the model the Institute now teaches, and her question, “Why can't the building itself be a centre for regeneration?”, is where this school began.

| | |
|---|---|
| **Since 1976**<br>Sun Villages | Designed and built a fully stand-alone off-grid solar home, an early autonomous house. Co-designed, renovated and delivered houses and multi-unit developments, including the 74 apartments at Young Street. |
| **1982**<br>A village brief | Her group studied *A Pattern Language* for a year to write a village brief for their architect. Her design principles also draw on Bill Mollison's early work on permanent culture. |
| **1997 to 2004**<br>Recognition | Partner in environmental work recognised nationally and internationally, including the International Sustainable Cities Award, presented by the King of Sweden in Stockholm in 2002. |
| **Finance and property**<br>Before and alongside Sun Villages | Worked as a futures dealer and in early computerised stock options markets. Owned a portfolio of more than 50 properties, and led a company of women who bought, renovated and sold houses. |
| **2019 to 2021**<br>Author | Wrote *Can't Buy Property?*, tracing the Sun Villages framework and the three principles every resilient village needs. |
| **Since 2003**<br>Off Gridz, Far South Coast | Stewards a 6.5-acre property with a 1901 homestead, applying hamlet planning and the Sun Villages financial model. |

*“The shape can be rebuilt, and the life can be rebuilt, but only on purpose, by design.” Stina Kerans*

# The Dean's role

The Dean holds the model. The school around her is built so that the model is shared, tested and passed on.

## The Dean

- Holds the model and has the final say on what is taught as the Sun Villages Institute Model
- Chairs the Teaching Circle that approves programs each year
- Teaches the Foundations course and opens each cohort
- Mentors the people building new villages
- Names and grows the next generation of teachers

## Supported by

- An Associate Dean from the first year, so the role is shared
- A School Coordinator who runs the school day to day
- Program leads who teach their own fields
- The Institute board, which signs licences and certifies villages

**THE TEACHING CIRCLE**

Elders, residents, trades and practitioners who teach what they know, in the hub, the barn and the garden. Some teaching can be settled in SUN on the village ledger.

## What the Dean brings to every cohort

- **Fifty years on the ground.** From a hand-built solar house to 74 apartments at Young Street and a coast homestead at Kianga.
- **The book.** *Can't Buy Property?* is the course's core text, and Stina teaches it herself in Foundations.
- **A working exchange.** Stina and the original team ran one of Australia's first local exchange systems on the Young Street site from about 1988 to 2015.
- **A finance mind.** Years in futures, options and property mean the money strand is taught by someone who has done it.

# How this school is different

## The village is the campus

Live sites

Learning happens at Young Street, Bungendore and the Narooma project at Kianga: in the hub, the barn, the garden and on the water.

## Learn it, then redo it

Every course

Each course is built on a real, finished project. Each cohort works out how it would do that project again, and its answer is written back into the course.

## Place first

Every program

Every program opens by reading the place. A village in the wrong pattern for its place fails, however good the finance.

## Films are the textbooks

The library

The Story of Place films and Sun Villages shorts carry the teaching. Every cohort adds footage and lessons.

## Elders teach, young people build

The Teaching Circle

The model puts elders at the centre of the village. The school puts them at the centre of teaching.

## The licence is graduation

The pathway

Finishing the pathway means a village is ready to join the Sun Villages network.

**PAID PARTLY IN THE VILLAGE CURRENCY**

Some fees and some teaching can be settled in SUN on the LETS, where tax rules allow. Time given to the village counts.

# Nine programs, one ecosystem

Each program is built from live work in the ecosystem, so learners study what is being done, not what might be.

| Program | Built from | Format | Taught by |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Foundations of Village Making** | The Sun Villages Institute Model, *Can't Buy Property?*, the three design principles | 8 sessions and a Village Day | Stina Kerans |
| **Reading Place** | The Living Places Institute method: 12 weeks, 6 phases, 16 steps | 12-week cohort | Anarkali Papalkar, Michael McElligott |
| **No Bank Debt Development** | Young Street: staged building, funds released on quantity surveyor certificates, develop and hold | Cohort and site practicum | Garry Kerans |
| **Building for Belonging** | The three design principles in built form, four integrative design workshops | Studio and site | Garry Kerans, with architects |
| **Feeding the Village** | The Food Resilience Living Lab, the growers' network, food on the LETS, the Food Plan | Practicum with growers | Anarkali Papalkar, with regional growers |
| **Water and the Village** | The closed water cycle, *The Long Work of Water*, the Kianga water system | Field days | Michael McElligott, with civil practitioners |
| **The Village Economy** | The LETS, the SUN, the co-op rules, the history of the Qbees exchange | Workshops and live trading | Stina Kerans, with LETS brokers |
| **Patient Capital** | The eight principles, protective lending terms, how a member co-op works. Principles only: no investment is offered in any course | Seminar series | Guest practitioners |
| **Story and Film** | The Story of Place films, the footage library, the film standard | Studio | Michael McElligott |

All programs are non-accredited in the founding year. Accredited units will be offered with a registered training partner, and research with university partners through the Living Places Institute.

# The LETS: money neighbours make between them

Time, skills, food and care, traded between neighbours and counted fairly. Stina's book calls it the yin currency a village cannot thrive without.

## What a LETS is

A Local Exchange Trading System is a shared ledger. Members offer what they can do or grow, and trade with each other in local credits. Every account starts at zero.

Give an hour of carpentry and your account goes up while the other person's goes down. A minus is not a debt to a bank. It is a promise to give something back to the village. No interest is charged, and nobody can buy their way in. The idea began with Michael Linton in the Comox Valley, Canada, in 1983.



*The weekly market is the heart of the exchange.*

*"LETS users won't get rich, but neither will they ever be debt slaves." Stina Kerans, Can't Buy Property?*

## Why a village needs two kinds of money

### Yang

NATIONAL MONEY

Comes from outside. Can be hoarded and made scarce. Good for buying from the world.

### Yin

LOCAL CREDIT

Made inside the group when people trade, and cannot be hoarded. Good for care, help and the work money ignores. The idea draws on Bernard Lietaer's work on complementary currencies.

### Together

A SAFETY NET

Someone with little cash and a lot of skill can take part fully from the first day, and a resident in a hard patch has another way to pay their way.

# It has worked here before

From 1988-89 to about 2015, Stina and the original team ran a LETS on the Young Street site, through markets held every Friday evening. Stina's book counts it as the second in Australia. Its units were called Qbees. It ended when the market was moved to Canberra for more room, and the energy went with it. The founding rule of the new exchange comes from that lesson: **an exchange lives where its people are.**

### 20 to 200
Active accounts. The size at which a LETS works best.

### Near zero
Where healthy accounts sit. People give about as much as they take.

### Weekly
The market is essential. Closing the old one unravelled the social fabric the exchange had built.

**Real money saved.** Stina's book works through a blocked gutter: about $300 through a strata manager, or about $100 in local credit through the village concierge.

## Three villages, one exchange

The exchange now runs in three villages: Young Street in Queanbeyan, Bungendore on the tablelands, and Kianga near Narooma. From Young Street, Bungendore is about 22 km and Kianga about 210 km by road. Each has its own character, its own market and its own economy. One system lets them trade while each stays itself. Every village opens with its first members, and twenty active members is the target in Stina's model.

In the city village, the not-for-profit that runs the Commons will run the exchange alongside the cafe, guest rooms, storage and car pool, so the LETS is part of daily life rather than an extra. Hours given to build the village are recorded in the ledger.

## Food first

Farmers at the regional permaculture gathering said the same thing: there is no good way to tell each other what is surplus, or to trade it. So the first use of the network is food. Growers across the region list what they have, set a price in SUN, dollars or both, and sell it at the weekly market, so good food is eaten rather than wasted.

**JOIN THE EXCHANGE**

Go to **sunvillages.trading** and pick your village. A local concierge meets you, usually at the market, and sends a personal sign-in link. No passwords. Then list what you offer and what you need. Want an exchange where you live? Propose a new place on the site.

*In the school: The Village Economy is taught on the live exchange.*

09 · THE FOOD LAB · BUILDING S, YOUNG STREET

# Food Resilience Living Lab

Grown below, stored with care, shared above. A proposed partnership between the Sun Villages Institute and the Living Places Institute.

Under Building S, the communal heart of Young Street, a 300 m² basement would grow greens, herbs and mushrooms all year, wash and chill the harvest, and store regional farm produce and a rotating reserve of staples. A lift carries the food up to a commercial-grade communal kitchen. Solar on the roof powers it. Every kilo, kilowatt and litre is measured and published with research partners, so other buildings can copy what works.

*"Store calories, grow freshness, and cook from the store every week." The rotation rule*

| 300 m² | ~3 t | 90 days | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Below-ground food rooms | Greens and herbs a year, about what residents eat (estimate) | Of grains, legumes and oils, always rotating (estimate) | Research questions, with open data |

## Two institutes, one living lab

### Sun Villages Institute

THE VILLAGE ON THE GROUND

The host building, residents as growers, cooks and co-researchers, the daily running of the growing, kitchen and stores, links to regional farms, and the emergency food plan.

### Living Places Institute

RESEARCH AND REACH

Research design and university partnerships, ethics and data agreements, the open data platform and annual report, research grants, and the Story of Place documentary.

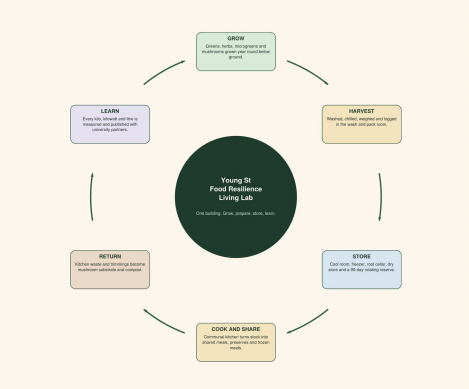
### Shared

COMMITMENTS

One open data set owned in common. Residents first. Measure before claiming. Partners named in writing before money moves. First Nations protocol before any native food or plant work.

The Food Lab is a proposal. It depends on the Young Street planning position and on approval by the board of the company that owns Building S, and its size, layout and timing may change. Figures are estimates. Research partners are named only once they agree.

# The food loop and the design

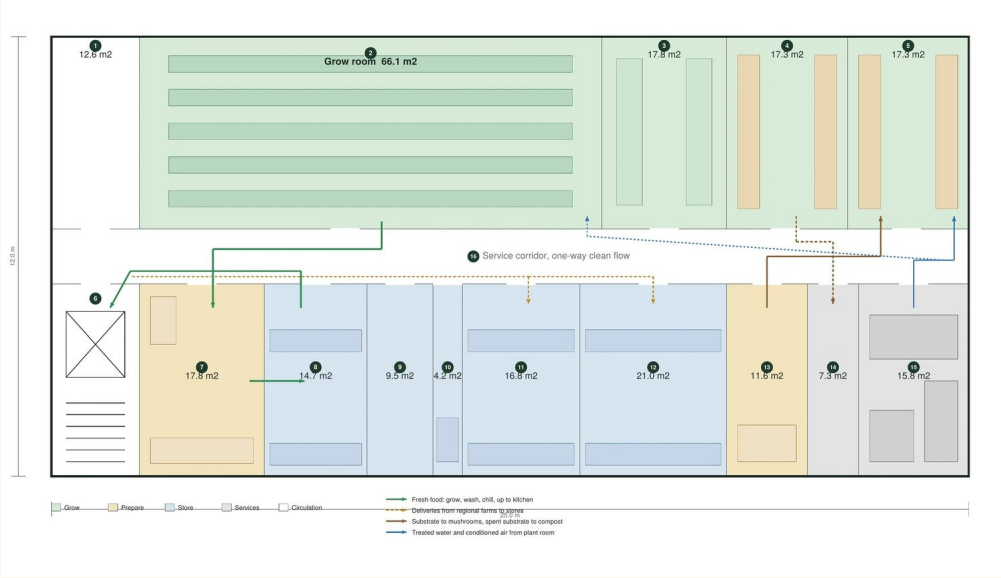



*The food loop: grow, harvest, store, cook and share, return, learn.*

Grow, harvest, store, cook and share, return the waste, and learn from all of it. Kitchen scraps and spent coffee grounds become mushroom substrate. Spent substrate becomes compost for the gardens.

Sixteen rooms in one clean, one-way flow: entry, grow, pack, store. Food rooms sit below and beside the homes, never inside them.

- Grow room, 66 m$^2$: greens, herbs and microgreens on tiered hydroponic racks under LEDs
- Mushroom incubation and fruiting: oyster and shiitake
- Propagation and native nursery, for the roof, the gardens and local regeneration
- Wash and pack, cool room at 2 to 4 °C, freezer at -18 °C
- Seed bank at -20 °C, root cellar, and a rotating 90-day dry store




*Basement plan, 300 m$^2$. An indicative concept, not for construction. Sizes will change with site investigation and design.*

## A university-grade living lab

| | Research question |
|---|---|
| RQ1 | Energy, yield and cost of basement food growing in a cold-climate apartment building on its own solar. |
| RQ2 | Does on-site food change residents' food security, diet and social connection? |
| RQ3 | How big a rotating reserve keeps a building fed for 30 and 90 days, and how to run it. |
| RQ4 | Closed loops: kitchen waste to substrate to compost to gardens, and water reuse. |
| RQ5 | Native plant propagation and local seed duplication for regeneration. |

# Feeding the villages

A food security plan for three regions, and a network of growers to carry it. Local food, grown close, stored well and traded between neighbours on the village exchange.

## The worst news first: the region cannot feed itself

The food system from Canberra to Narooma copes with price rises. It does not cope with anything that closes the highways or cuts the power for more than a day.

### 144 ha

Of vegetables, fruit, nuts and vines across the ACT, Queanbeyan-Palerang and Eurobodalla combined. 98 per cent of farmed land is grazing.

ABS, Agricultural Commodities, 2020-21

### One road in

Every supermarket from Canberra to Narooma is stocked by truck from distribution centres in western Sydney.

Woolworths Group 2025; Food and Drink Business 2024

### 6 to 9 days

How long Narooma went without normal supermarket supply in January 2020, when fire cut the highways and the power.

Worked out from dated ABC and The Beagle reports

### 1 in 3

Australian households were food insecure in the year to mid 2026. Regional households are worse off.

Foodbank Hunger Report 2026

### About 4 in 10

Narooma residents are 65 or over. Older people who live alone, or have no car, lose food access first.

2021 Census

### No plan

No council in the region has a funded food plan. The national strategy is not due until mid 2027.

## The plan: three layers on every site

### Daily food

LAYER 1

Gardens, orchards and the cafe. Fresh greens, herbs and fruit within a hundred metres of every home, and a reason to be out among neighbours every day.

### Seasonal stores

LAYER 2

A village larder: a root cellar, a cool room and a preserving kitchen, buying regional food in season at farm price and turning it over.

### A shock reserve

LAYER 3

Fourteen days of staples now, thirty when the Commons opens, ninety as a tested target. Eaten from every week so nothing expires. A register of who needs help first.

**The first rule.** Each site stands alone for fourteen days. Trade between sites is the second line, not the first, because both roads have closed in the last six years.

**THE FIRST SEASON, SUMMER 2026 TO 2027**

Year one feeds no one. It finds out. Soil tests, harvest logs, trials and seed. The first protein crop is faba bean, sown near Bungendore in April 2027 and harvested that December. The first nuts come in 2030 at the earliest.

Every figure carries its source in the full report, *Feeding the villages*, v1.0, 4 November 2026. Nothing here is dietary or medical advice.

# Three regions, one network

Three climates, from frosty tablelands to a humid coast. They harvest in different seasons, so a bad year in one is rarely a bad year in all.

| Region | Grows | Holds or supplies | Cannot |
|---|---|---|---|
| **1. Canberra basin and Queanbeyan**<br>Young Street. 580 m. About 59 frost nights a year. | The fresh food: greens, herbs, berries, Asian greens, sprouts and mushrooms, in courtyards, the Commons and the basement lab. | The stores, the kitchen, the seed bank and the exchange. | Grow the family's calories. There is not enough ground. |
| **2. Southern Tablelands, Bungendore and Braidwood**<br>About 700 m. Rain fed. | The protein and the calories: faba bean, field pea, lupin, oats, potatoes, pumpkins, onions and garlic. Hazelnut, chestnut, walnut and apple. | The only region where a plant-based family's land budget closes. | Count on rain. Rainfall is 600 to 720 mm and falling. |
| **3. Far south coast, Kianga, Moruya and Bodalla**<br>The Narooma project. Near sea level. Mild winters. | The second season: sweet potato, cowpea, citrus, avocado, macadamia and olive. Finger lime, lilly pilly, Davidson plum and warrigal greens. | Oil, winter vitamin C, and beach-cast seaweed for iodine within the NSW limits. | Grow enough pulses. The coast eats tablelands pulses. |

## Dry goods move. Fresh food stays.

Fresh food is eaten where it grows. The network moves only what keeps: seed, dry pulses and grain, nuts in shell, pressed oil, dried fruit and herbs, and fermented food, preserved at the producing site and then sent. Fruit, seedlings and soil do not travel from the coast to the tablelands without a biosecurity check, because Queensland fruit fly is spreading south.

Seed is open pollinated only. Each site keeps a working jar collection.

## Grow with us

- **Join the LETS** at sunvillages.trading/join and pick your village: Young Street, Bungendore or Kianga.
- **Meet the concierge**, usually at the weekly market, who sends your sign-in link.
- **List your food** under Offers: fruit, vegetables, herbs, honey, eggs, preserves. Price it in SUN, dollars or both.
- **Sell at the market.** Need hands at harvest? List it as a need and pay in SUN.

## How the network works

- **Roles.** Each site has a convenor, a seed keeper and a harvest recorder, rotated and credited in SUN. Every grower over 75 has a buddy.
- **Earn a plot.** New growers help at two other plots first, the Permablitz rule that has run since 2006.
- **Measure.** Five things logged per site each season: bed area, harvest weight, hours, credits issued, and where the food went.
- **Three people.** Nothing that happens weekly is owned by fewer than three people.
- **A node, not the convenor.** Good food groups already work across the region. The Institute joins them and adds what is missing: stores, a reserve, an exchange and measured data.

# Young Street, the city village

Seventy four homes have stood here since 2012. The last part of the site is where the whole Sun Villages model gets built: no bank, no developer's margin, nothing ever sold.

## Forty five years on one piece of ground

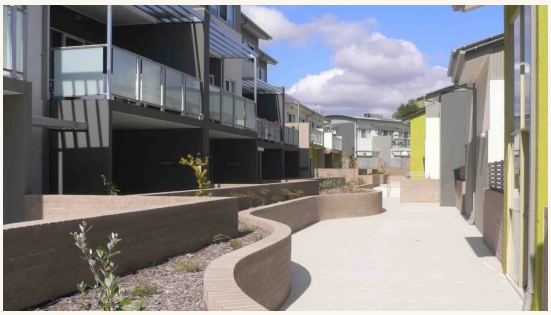
At Christmas 1980 Stina found two and a half acres on the New South Wales side of the border, close to Canberra. A group of thirteen secured it. Stina and Garry married on the site in October 1981 and moved in the following February.

It was once earmarked as the home of the Permaculture Institute, with Bill Mollison a regular visitor. From 1988-89 to about 2015 its Friday evening markets ran one of Australia's first local exchange systems. Garry project managed the first two stages: seventy four apartments and townhouses, finished in 2012 and lived in ever since.

The remaining land sits beside an old railway line, so its outlook will not be built out, and a bike path runs to Canberra along one boundary.



*The site from the north, with the remaining land at left.*



*The pedestrian street through the first two stages.*

## How the village works

### Held, not sold

ONE TITLE

The company holds the land and building on one title, for generations. No strata, no unit sold.

### No bank debt

THE CONSTITUTION

No bank and no mortgage over the land, so no foreclosure. Changing that needs a 75 per cent vote of shareholders.

### A long lease

NOT A TENANCY

Residents would hold a 99 year lease with a 99 year option. The lease fee rises with wages, not the rental market.

### The Commons

A VILLAGE HEART

A cafe, workshop barn, library, gardens and storage, run by a not-for-profit so every surplus makes living there cheaper.

### Time counts too

THE LEDGER

Neighbours trade hours of help on the village exchange, and hours given to build it are recorded in the ledger.

### Every age

SPACES THAT GROW AND SHRINK

Homes that expand and contract with life, so nobody has to leave the people they know.

# Built in stages, not all at once

| | |
|---|---|
| 1<br>The hub forecourt | The space in front of the existing hub, used now: weekly sessions and a community forming on site while the rest is planned. |
| 2<br>The car park | Built early to remove the largest cost risk, and doubling as hard stand for markets and film nights. |
| 3<br>S block and the Commons | The first homes, and the village heart: cafe, workshop barn, library, gardens and storage. The Food Lab would sit beneath. |
| 4<br>G block | The larger residential building, built once the first is built and lived in. |

Shareholders see a fully documented proposal and vote on it before anything is committed to construction.

## Young Street on film

| Film | What it shows |
|---|---|
| *The House That Breathes*, 5 min | A new way to own a home in Queanbeyan and the Canberra Basin. |
| *An Ordinary Tuesday*, 10 min | What a house costs when the neighbours own the building. |
| *A Village Where the Money Never Leaves*, 7 min | How money circulates inside the village instead of draining out. |
| *I Am Not Built Yet*, short | A different way to own a home in Queanbeyan, in the village's own voice. |

**COME TO A SITE MORNING**

Friday community sessions and site mornings run now. Write to stina@sunvillages.institute to come along.

## Bungendore, the tablelands village

Bungendore, on the Southern Tablelands about 22 km from Young Street, is the third village on the exchange. A farm near Bungendore is its anchor grower, and its market day and place are being set with the first members. It is the region that grows the calories and the protein in the Food Plan.

# Narooma, the ocean village

A homestead by the inlet, becoming a Sun Village. Six and a half acres that can already feed, water and power themselves.

Narooma sits on Wagonga Inlet. Gulaga stands to the west, the Pacific breaks along the long beaches to the east, and the dark stacks of Glasshouse Rocks run just south of town. Kianga is the northern edge, across the bridge. The site is there: the Kianga Homestead, built in 1901, and a motel of eighteen rooms, with grass, gums, fruit trees and room to grow.

People have offered to buy the land for house blocks. Garry and Stina have said no.

*"Our aim is to secure this beautiful site beyond our lifetime, in perpetuity, safe from subdivision." Garry and Stina Kerans, July 2025*



*Wagonga Inlet, with Gulaga behind. Drone photograph, 24 October 2026.*



*Glasshouse Rocks.*

## Already on the ground

### 2017
A council-approved wastewater system returns water and nutrients to the land. Pipes and power run underground in a site loop.

### 30 kW
Solar on the motel roof, upgraded from 10 kW in May 2023, plus a large solar hot water system.

### 32
Kinds of food plants producing: apples, avocados, macadamias, mangoes, lychees, figs, olives, coffee, citrus, berries and more.

### Stock
Fencing done. Sheep, ducks and chickens on site. Grass is eaten, not mowed.

### The motel
Already earns, and can grow into an Ecotel: guests, new residents on a trial stay, and small businesses on land zoned for commerce.

### Boats
One for the lake and prawning, a larger one for ocean fishing, and people who know how.

# From homestead to hamlet

The site's carrying capacity has been assessed at about twenty five small homes alongside the motel, around forty small dwellings in all. Getting there safely means building the water and the energy first.

## Water
Catch the rain

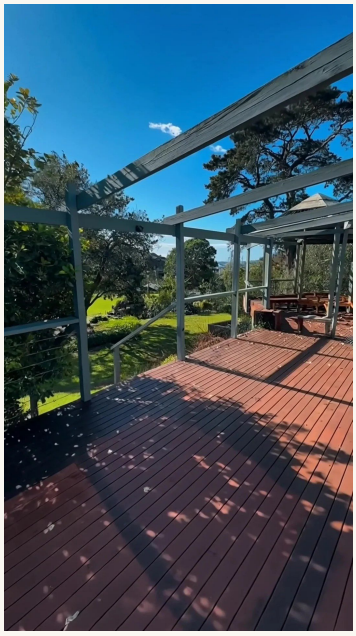
Four more 120,000 litre tanks filled from the large metal roofs. About 900 mm of rain falls here a year, and the plan is to catch at least 80 per cent of what lands. One new roof, clear of trees, with a first flush system for the best drinking water on site. Town water becomes the backup.

## Energy
Stand alone

A system that keeps working if the grid is too dear or goes down. Three ways to make power (sun, wind, and water pumped uphill for a micro hydro), two ways to store it (the high tank and batteries), and a generator as the last resort.

## Homes
And people

Small dwellings added in stages as the services allow. Anyone joining agrees to the site's tenet of ethics and lives here for a three month trial first. Skills and time on site are counted alongside money.



*The homestead deck.*

## What learners do here

Kianga is where Water and the Village is taught in the field, where the coast growers of the Food Plan trade on the exchange, and where Reading Place cohorts study a coast village that already lives off its own water, sun and soil.

**SUMMER GATHERING, 11 TO 14 DECEMBER 2026**

Walk the site, meet Garry and Stina, eat from the garden, swim the inlet. Bring your skills: water, solar, building, food growing, hospitality, fishing, bookkeeping. The first Kianga market is planned for the gathering.

# From Learner to Teacher

One path for learning and for joining the network. Each stage matches a stage of the Sun Villages licence.

| | |
|---|---|
| **Learner**<br>Licence stage: Affiliate | Attend a Village Day. Complete Foundations of Village Making. |
| **Practitioner**<br>Licence stage: Candidate | Read your own place in a 12-week cohort. Complete the feasibility and design studios. Form your group. |
| **Steward**<br>Licence stage: Licensed | Complete a practicum on a live Sun Villages site. Build or convert your village to the Standard. |
| **Teacher**<br>Licence stage: Certified, each year | Pass the annual review. Mentor a new group. Write your lessons back into the course. |

FIVE ROLES IN EVERY VILLAGE GROUP

## Living Systems Advocate · Place Holder · Economic Agent · Designer · Community Keeper

Every learner takes one role. A group needs all five before it builds.

13 · HOW PEOPLE LEARN

# Ways in

| Format | What it is | Good to know |
|---|---|---|
| Village Day | A monthly open day at a live village: walk the site, eat at the hub, trade on the LETS, hear from residents. | Free or low cost. The front door. |
| Cohort | A group of 12 to 20 working through a program together over weeks, on their own site. | The core format. What each cohort learns is written back into the course. |
| Practicum | Supervised time on a live Sun Villages site. | A real learning placement, with inductions, White Card and insurance in place. |
| Residency | Visiting practitioners and researchers stay in the village while they work. | Live alongside the people you are learning from. |
| Teaching Circle | Elders, residents and trades teach what they know, in the hub or the barn. | Can be settled partly in SUN. |
| School visits | Local children see the village and the barn, and learn by watching. | With Working with Children Checks. |
| The Library | Every film, place study, lesson and post-project review. | Open to every learner. |

14 · THE FOUNDING YEAR

# 2027, quarter by quarter

| Quarter | What runs | Where |
|---|---|---|
| Q1 | Monthly Village Days begin. Foundations of Village Making pilot cohort, taught by Stina, 12 places. | Young Street |
| Q2 | Reading Place cohort for the Bungendore and Kianga groups. Village Economy workshops on the live exchange. | Bungendore, Kianga and Young Street |
| Q3 | Feeding the Village practicum with the growers' network. No Bank Debt Development cohort. | Young Street and regional farms |
| Q4 | First Practitioner reviews against the licence. Every course updated from the year's project reviews. | All sites |

Fees, dates and places are published before each program opens. Before then, the Kianga summer gathering (11 to 14 December 2026) and the Friday site mornings at Young Street are open now.

# The people building the Institute

Stina leads the school as Dean. Three others carry the Institute's work across building, place and the ecosystem.



## Garry Kerans

**CO-FOUNDER AND PROJECT MANAGER, SUN VILLAGES**

Garry met Stina in 1977 and with her hand-built the double-brick solar house she designed, doing every trade himself. He designed, built and marketed onsite wastewater treatment systems for multi-unit and government buildings along Australia's east coast, and worked as principal environmental consultant in Melbourne, Canberra and other regions. With Stina he has redeveloped or built 163 apartments and houses, and he project managed the design and construction of the first two stages at Young Street: 74 apartments.

**Awards.** National Metal Building Design Award of Merit (1997). Water Conservation Award, Condamine Court, Canberra (1997). International World Habitat Award for greywater reuse, Condamine Court (1998). National Metal Building Award, Tinderry Building (1999). Greensmart Award with the City of Port Phillip, Inkerman Oasis (2002). International Sustainable Cities Award, Inkerman Oasis, Stockholm (2002). Urban Development Association Award, 8 Davison Street, Crestwood (2004).

*In the school: leads No Bank Debt Development, Building for Belonging and the site practicums.*



## Anarkali Papalkar

**FOUNDING DIRECTOR, THE LIVING PLACES INSTITUTE · REGENERATIVE DEVELOPER, VERIDIAN**

Anarkali started in bushland regeneration in the Hunter Valley: collecting native seed, running botanical surveys and bringing mined ground back to something that could hold water and life again. She worked as a restoration ecologist on mine-site rehabilitation and native corridors (2020 to 2023), and as an environmental scientist in native seed provenance (2024 to 2026).

She trained in Ecovillage Design Education at Findhorn, built an off-grid passive solar hemp home, and served as a member-elected director of a not-for-profit landshare in the Hunter. At the Living Places Institute she leads Story of Place research, wrote the Crestwood Safe and Shaded Streets strategy, and lodged the Institute's submission on the Council's Disability Inclusion Action Plan. Trading regional farm surplus through the Sun Villages LETS was her idea.

*In the school: leads Reading Place and Feeding the Village.*



# Michael McElligott

**FOUNDER AND CEO, VERIDIAN · ECOSYSTEM BUILDER, SUN VILLAGES INSTITUTE**

Michael founded Veridian, a regenerative development company that designs and co-creates property projects, investment structures and community governance models across Australia. Its test is simple: development should leave people, place and capital healthier than it found them, and do it profitably.

After a Diploma in Property Development with the Property Council of Australia, he worked on a $200 million equity raise for a $500 million Defence Housing Australia development portfolio. He founded GreenNote, a licensed building and development company working under the NSW Low Rise Housing Diversity Code, raised over $2 million for a digital bank start-up, and helped structure an affordable housing impact fund backed by specialist disability accommodation leases. He is Development Manager for Young Street, leading its regenerative design and delivery.

**Certifications.** Capital Institute, regenerative economics and finance. Permaculture Design Certificate. International Living Future accredited. Certified Passive House Designer. Infrastructure Sustainability AP. Green Star Accredited Professional. SDA design professional. Principles of Sustainable Finance (Erasmus, RSM). United Nations Diploma (UNAA). Life-cycle assessment (eToolLCD).

He co-founded the Australian Community Land Trust Network, directed the Circular Economy Infrastructure Group, led a taskforce for the Circular Economy Alliance Australia and founded the Living Places Institute. He has written more than 700 daily essays on *My Regen Journey* over three years.

*In the school: leads Story and Film and Water and the Village, and co-teaches Reading Place.*

# How the school works

The licence asks every village for an honest public record. The school holds itself to the same standard.

| Commitment | What it means |
|---|---|
| Plain about recognition | Founding-year programs are non-accredited and do not lead to a recognised qualification. Accredited units are offered only through a registered training partner. |
| Nothing sold in the room | Courses teach principles and structures. No course offers shares or investments, and course lists are never used for sales. |
| Partners named when they agree | Training, research and university partners are named only once they have agreed in writing. |
| Research in the open | Research runs through the Living Places Institute, with ethics agreements and open data owned in common. |
| Country and culture | No teaching about Country without the free, prior and informed consent of its Traditional Custodians. Public record only. |
| Safe on site | White Card for site work, inductions and insurance for every practicum, and Working with Children Checks for school visits. |
| Fair placements | Practicums are real learning placements, run under Fair Work rules. |
| An open record | What is done, what is under way and what is not yet done is published, for the school as for every village. |

17 · JOIN THE FOUNDING YEAR

# Begin with a visit

Every program starts with Foundations, and every learner starts by seeing a live village.

1. Come to a Friday site morning at Young Street, or a Village Day from early 2027.
2. Register for Foundations of Village Making, taught by Stina. Twelve places in the pilot cohort.
3. Grow food? Join the LETS at sunvillages.trading and sell at the weekly market.
4. Come to the Kianga summer gathering, 11 to 14 December 2026.
5. Researchers, growers, designers and teachers: write to us about the Food Lab and the Teaching Circle.

CONTACT


## Stina Kerans, Dean of School

Sun Villages Institute

stina@sunvillages.institute · sunvillages.institute · sunvillages.trading



**Important information.** This document describes the School of Village Making as planned for its founding year, 2027. Programs, timing and partners may change. Founding-year courses are not accredited and do not lead to a recognised qualification. The Food Lab and the Narooma plans are proposals and depend on approvals. Nothing in this document, or taught in any course, is an offer of shares, an invitation to invest, or financial, legal, tax, dietary or medical advice. Images marked as illustrations are not designs of any site.



SUN VILLAGES

INSTITUTE

# *The School of Village Making*

Founding year 2027. Young Street, Queanbeyan.

**SUNVILLAGES.INSTITUTE**

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