

LESS SPACE, MORE STYLE - TINY HOUSE LIVING MAGAZINE!

TINY LIVING



Tiny House
Hub

JULY 2024 | ISSUE 17

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GOVERNMENT'S GRANNY FLATS REFORMS: A FALSE HOPE FOR TINY HOUSE OWNERS

By Sharla May

The New Zealand government recently released a discussion document titled "[Making It Easier to Build Granny Flats](#)," proposing changes to the Building Act and the Resource Management Act (RMA). These changes aim to streamline the process for constructing small, self-contained, detached houses up to 60 square metres, commonly referred to as granny flats. However, while this initiative seeks to address the housing crisis by increasing the supply of affordable homes, it misses a significant opportunity to include tiny houses, particularly those on wheels, within its scope.

The Missed Opportunity for Tiny Houses

The proposed reforms focus solely on traditional granny flats, ignoring the unique and growing sector of tiny houses. Tiny

houses on wheels represent a crucial part of the housing market, providing affordable, flexible, and sustainable living options. These homes are often mobile, allowing owners to lease land temporarily and relocate as needed. This mobility is a significant advantage in a market where land ownership is increasingly unaffordable.

Tiny house owners face numerous challenges under the current regulations. These homes must comply with both the Building Act and the Land Transport Act, which often have conflicting requirements. For instance, a trailer, which serves as the foundation for a tiny house on wheels, is not an approved foundation under the Building Act. Furthermore, design elements like stair tread depth, loft heights, and emergency

egress requirements pose additional hurdles for compliance.

The Inadequacy of Proposed Reforms

The government's proposed changes include adding a new schedule to the Building Act to provide a building consent exemption for granny flats up to 60 square metres.

However, this schedule requires all building work to comply with the building code, which is problematic for tiny houses due to their unique design constraints. The changes also apply only to new builds, offering no relief for existing tiny house owners.

Additionally, the proposed national environmental standard for minor residential units under the RMA mandates that these units be held in common ownership with a principal residential unit on the same site. This requirement is at odds with the reality of tiny house living, where land is often leased, not owned.

The Need for Broader Reforms

The government's narrow focus on granny flats fails to address the broader housing needs of New Zealanders. By not including tiny houses in the proposed reforms, the government overlooks a valuable solution to the housing crisis. Tiny houses offer an affordable alternative to traditional homes, particularly in a market where land prices are prohibitive.

Moreover, the proposed requirement for councils to be notified when granny flats are built—so they can update property values for rating purposes, update LIMs, or charge development fees—creates a bureaucratic nightmare for tiny house owners. These owners do not want the landowner's rates permanently increased or lump-sum development fees levied just for leasing land temporarily.

A Call to Action

The government's proposed changes are a classic case of too little, too late. They offer no real relief to those already living in tiny homes and add layers of unnecessary complexity. Real, substantial reform is needed to support tiny house living in New Zealand.

We urge you to make a submission on this discussion document, advocating for the inclusion of tiny houses within the scope of these reforms. Let's hold the government accountable and ensure they make the necessary changes to truly support affordable housing options for all New Zealanders.

How to Make a Submission

Making your voice heard is crucial. Submissions on the proposed changes are open until 12 August 2024. You can make a submission by completing [this survey](#) and following the instructions provided.

Together, we can push for more substantial reforms that recognise and support the diverse housing needs of New Zealanders, including those who choose to live in tiny houses.

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Photo Credit, South Base Homes

YOUR TINY HOUSE COULD WIN YOU \$2,000 ENTER BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE!

Do you have a gorgeous tiny home that you're bursting with pride about? Well, the New Zealand Tiny House Awards are your perfect chance to show it off! These awards celebrate the fantastic work happening in the tiny house community across New Zealand, and they've been growing like crazy each year. With more entries and thousands of public votes rolling in, it's the ultimate platform to spotlight the most innovative and creative tiny house designs out there.

So, what's the scoop for this year? Entries are open until 22nd July 2024, and the winners will be announced at the Tiny House Expo on 11th October 2024. After some sneaky attempts at fraudulent voting last year, we've put in place strict measures to keep things



Photo Credit, Cocoon Tiny Homes



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HOMES

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designed
cabins**

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fair. This year all categories except the People's Choice Award will be judged by a panel of experts. Public voting for the People's Choice Award runs from 30th July to 10th September 2024, so your vote still counts!

Got a tiny house you're proud of? Or maybe you're about to get the keys to one? This is your moment! We've got categories like Best Commercial Build, Most Creative Design, Best DIY Build, and the big one – Tiny House of the Year. Winners bag some cool prizes, with the overall champ walking away with \$2,000. But it's not just about the money. The awards are a fantastic way to get your work noticed and to inspire others.



Photo Credit, Hygge House



Photo Credit, Hygge House

Why Enter?

Entering your tiny house isn't just about winning (although that's pretty awesome, too). It's about being part of a vibrant, supportive community that shares your passion for tiny living. It's a brilliant opportunity to show off the incredible talent and creativity in New Zealand's tiny house scene. Let's see if our judges and all of New Zealand fall in love with your tiny house just as much as you do!

So, what are you waiting for? Enter your build and rally your friends, family, and fellow tiny house lovers to vote. For all the details and to get started, head over to the official [NZ Tiny House Awards website](http://www.nztinyhouseawards.co.nz).



IS TINY HOUSE LIVING FOR YOU?

RYAN STEVENS UNVEILS THE TRUTH BEHIND TINY HOUSE COMMUNITY LIFE!

Ryan Steven, his partner Ziski, and their son Auri have embraced a unique lifestyle in a tiny house community, swapping traditional housing for a more sustainable, community-oriented living space. For anyone pondering a similar shift, Ryan's experiences and insights shed light on the realities of tiny house community life, with a few thought-provoking questions to consider.

Setting the Scene: Community Guidelines and Governance

"In our tiny house community, we rely on common courtesy more than formal rules," Ryan explains. The community focuses on maintaining a clean environment, driving safely on shared paths, and assisting each other with tasks like moving stock. An essential aspect is the responsible use of shared water resources, crucial for sustainability and fairness.

Question to Ponder: Are you prepared to live in an environment where mutual respect and shared responsibilities are more important than rigid rules?

Visitors and Social Life: Balancing Openness with Respect

Ryan describes the community's approach to visitors and social gatherings with a focus on



minimal disruption. "Visitors are welcome, but they need to adhere to our lifestyle, particularly in resource usage and ensuring gates are kept closed for the safety of community livestock."

Social gatherings are infrequent, ensuring everyone's peace is preserved, and communal spaces are carefully positioned to avoid any disturbances.

Question to Ponder: How do you feel about hosting visitors under strict community guidelines? Is a quiet social life something you're comfortable with?



Photo Credit, Living Big in a Tiny House



Photo Credit, Living Big in a Tiny House



Photo Credit, Living Big in a Tiny House

Pets, Privacy, and Interactions

Pets are part of the community, but with limitations to maintain balance. "We have policies in place to ensure pets do not disturb the livestock or other members, with any issues quickly addressed through our community WhatsApp group."

Privacy is respected via the natural spacing between homes and polite communication norms, which facilitate meaningful interactions without overstepping personal boundaries.

Question to Ponder: Could you adapt to managing your pets under community guidelines while also respecting the broader needs of your neighbours?

Decision-Making and Community Involvement

"Decisions about community rules or significant changes are made through discussions with the landowner and among residents," Ryan shares, highlighting the collaborative nature of governance in their community. This process, he notes, is facilitated by shared values and a group chat that keeps everyone connected without the need for regular meetings.

Question to Ponder: Are you comfortable with a communal decision-making process where your voice is one of many in shaping the living environment?

Daily Routines and Sustainability

A typical day for Ryan involves communal activities like water collection and gardening,



with weekends bringing the community closer through shared tasks and socialising. Sustainability is a core focus, with efforts to conserve water, energy, and manage waste effectively through practices like humanure composting.

Question to Ponder: How willing are you to engage in daily communal tasks and live sustainably, potentially changing significant aspects of your lifestyle?

Challenges and Personal Growth

"Managing resources, especially in winter, is a challenge," Ryan admits, noting the careful planning required to live sustainably.

However, he also reflects on the personal growth and enhanced sense of security the community has fostered, emphasising the deep connections formed with neighbours.

Question to Ponder: Are you ready to face the logistical and interpersonal challenges of

community living while embracing the potential for personal growth?

The Future of Tiny House Living

Ryan is optimistic about the future of tiny house communities, citing legal advancements and growing recognition of their benefits. He sees these communities as playing a crucial role in addressing broader societal challenges through sustainable living practices.

Question to Ponder: Do you see yourself as part of a movement that not only changes how you live but potentially influences broader societal norms?

Ryan's journey into tiny house community living offers a candid look at the adjustments, benefits, and challenges of this lifestyle. For those considering a similar path, it's essential to weigh the communal, sustainable, and minimalistic aspects against personal preferences and lifestyle needs.

SO, YOU THINK YOU WANT TO GO TINY?

HERE ARE 10 THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW FROM THE BEGINNING.

By Sharla May

So, you're toying with the idea of downsizing to a tiny house? That's fantastic! Embracing the tiny lifestyle is an exciting journey filled with unique challenges and rewards. But before you take the plunge, here are ten things you should know right from the get-go.

1. Define Your Why

Before anything else, understand why you want to go tiny. Are you looking to reduce your carbon footprint, save money, or simply live more simply? Your motivation will guide many of your decisions down the road. Knowing your "why" helps you stay focused when the going gets tough.

2. Know the Legal Landscape

Tiny house regulations can be a maze. Depending on where you live, you might face zoning laws, building codes, and land use restrictions. Some areas are more tiny-house-friendly than others, so research thoroughly and consider consulting with a professional. Check local council guidelines to see if your tiny house will be considered a vehicle or a building.

3. Get Comfortable with Downsizing

Moving into a tiny house means getting rid of a lot of your stuff. Start the decluttering process early and be ruthless. If it doesn't serve a purpose or bring you joy, it's probably got to go. Living with less can be liberating but also requires a mindset shift.

4. Choose the Right Foundation

One of the first decisions you'll need to make is whether your tiny house will be on wheels, skids, or a fixed foundation. Each option has its pros and cons. Wheels offer mobility but come with weight and size limitations. Skids are a more affordable option but less mobile. Fixed foundations can offer more stability and space but require building consent.

5. Budget Wisely

Tiny houses can be cost-effective, but costs can add up quickly if you're not careful. Create a realistic budget that includes not just the building costs but also land, utilities, insurance, and unexpected expenses. Be prepared for the financial commitment. Track your expenses to avoid running out of money mid-build.

6. Plan Your Utilities

Tiny houses require thoughtful planning when it comes to utilities. Think about how you will handle water, sewage, electricity, and internet. Options range from hooking up to existing utilities to going completely off-grid with solar power and composting toilets. Make sure your connections are easily detachable if your house is on wheels.

7. Design for Your Needs

One size does not fit all in the world of tiny houses. Your design should reflect your lifestyle and needs. Think about how you'll use the space daily and what's most important to you, whether it's a full kitchen, a workspace, or storage solutions. Spend time perfecting your design to avoid costly changes later.

8. Secure Your Tiny House

If your tiny house is on wheels, securing it is essential. Invest in hitch locks, wheel locks, and GPS trackers. These devices can prevent theft and help you recover your home if it's stolen. Also, consider additional tie-

down points to secure your home during strong winds.

9. Join the Community

The tiny house community is a great resource. Join online forums, attend tiny house festivals, and connect with other tiny house enthusiasts. They can offer support, share their experiences, and provide valuable advice. Learning from others can help you avoid common pitfalls and find creative solutions.

10. Test the Waters

Before committing fully, try out tiny living. Rent a tiny house for a few weeks or take a tiny house vacation. This experience can give you valuable insights and help you decide if this lifestyle is right for you. It's better to discover any deal-breakers before you make a significant investment.

Going tiny is a big decision, but with careful planning and realistic expectations, it can lead to a simpler, more fulfilling life. So, take your time, do your homework, and get ready to embrace the tiny life!

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Wondering how to find land for your tiny house or motorhome?

Landshare: New Zealand's online directory connecting tiny house owners and land owners.



NEW

LAND FOR LEASE



Land Lease Opportunity for Tiny House in Central Hawke's Bay



HAWKE'S BAY

 [Click here to view the full listing](#)

 \$130 per week

- **Available:** Now
- **Site foundation:** Fully fenced paddock
- **Water connection:** No
- **Power connection:** No
- **Off-street parking:** Yes
- **Pets:** Yes
- **Child Friendly:** Yes
- **Smokers:** No
- **WiFi connection:** No
- **Private location:** Yes

Explore the opportunity to lease around 750m² of picturesque land in Ongaonga, Central Hawke's Bay, perfect for someone seeking tranquility and privacy. This parcel offers its own access, ensuring seclusion and independence. We are looking for a quiet, tidy, and respectful tenant. The land is adaptable to your lifestyle needs, with possibilities for pets (excluding dogs and cats), chickens, and vegetable gardens, all negotiable. Tenants must be fully self-contained, with potential arrangements for no power, water, and WiFi connections based on specific needs.

NEW

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WELLINGTON

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Looking for:

- **Power connection:** No
- **Water connection:** Yes
- **Off-street Parking:** No
- **Pet Friendly:** Yes
- **Child Friendly:** No
- **Smokers:** No
- **WiFi Connection:** No
- **Private Location:** No



**Tiny House
Landshare**

A young professional working full-time in Horticulture in Central Wellington seeks a rental space for an 11m Leyland Leopard housebus, with a planned move around end of June or early July due to the sale of their current rental. This individual is self-sufficient with plans to set up solar power, requiring only a water supply and cell phone reception to meet work obligations. Accompanied by Boots, a friendly and well-trained five-year-old cat, they are known for being a reliable tenant with references from previous rentals available upon request. Ideal for landowners looking for a responsible and low-maintenance tenant.

Leasing land for a tiny?

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