

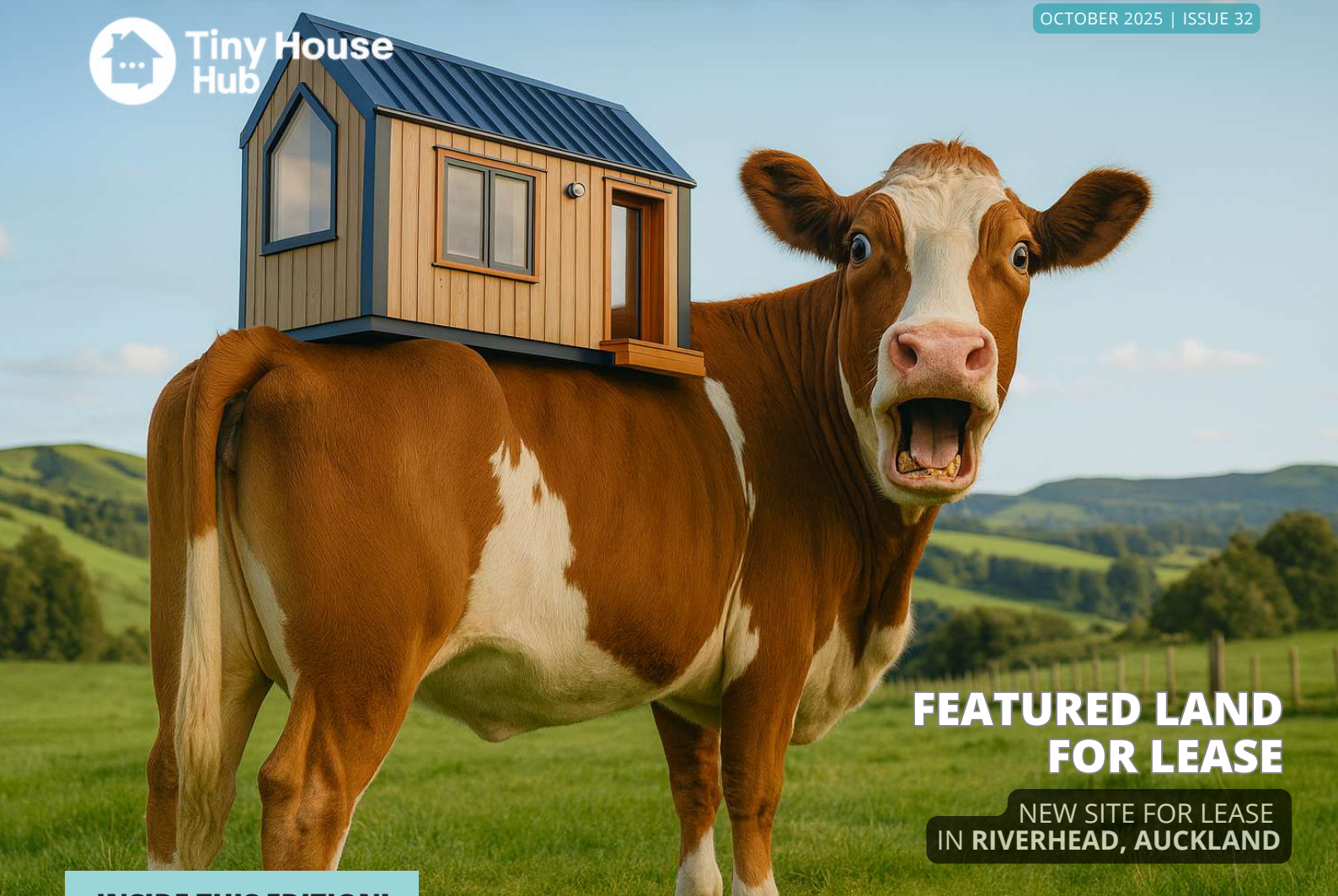
LESS SPACE, MORE STYLE - TINY HOUSE LIVING MAGAZINE!

TINY LIVING



Tiny House
Hub

OCTOBER 2025 | ISSUE 32



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INSIDE THIS EDITION!

THE EDEN PROJECT:

One Inheritance, 15
Tiny Homes

TINY HOUSE ROOKIE MISTAKES

And How the Expo Helps
You Avoid Them

THE 15 WORST TINY HOUSE DESIGN MISTAKES

aka How to Ruin
Your Life in 20m²



Tiny House Hub

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THE EDEN PROJECT: ONE INHERITANCE, 15 TINY HOMES

Anna was living in a caravan with her son when she saw the Facebook post. (Australian Story: Simon Winter)

You know what's rare these days? A housing story that doesn't make you want to crawl under the duvet with a packet of biscuits and never come out. But the Eden Tiny House Project in Australia? Well, hold onto your tea, because this one actually delivers a bit of hope.

Here's the gist: fifteen women, single mums, renters, women who'd been shoved to the edge by sky-high rents and life generally being a pain in the backside, were given the chance to build their own tiny homes. Not McMansions. Not "executive lifestyle builds with six bathrooms and a wine cellar you'll never use." Real, practical tiny homes on wheels.

The catch? They weren't handed the keys with a cheery *"good luck, darling."* Each woman had to contribute around \$40k of her own money and do the mahi to get it built. In return, they got \$55k funding and training through Tiny House

University. So this wasn't some saintly handout. This was: *"Here's a ladder. Climb it yourself. We'll steady it so you don't break your neck."*

Now, this is the bit that makes Eden different. It didn't start with a government scheme or a corporate social-responsibility budget. It started with something much more ordinary, a family inheritance. Susan Boden, a mental-health worker in Canberra, found herself with access to funds left behind by family. Instead of doing what most of us would do, upgrade the car, buy a kitchen bench that doesn't wobble, maybe splash out on a holiday, she and a GP colleague asked, *"What if we used this to actually solve something?"*

That inheritance money was used to underwrite the project: to set up training, provide each woman with a \$55k contribution, and get the ball rolling. But, and this is crucial, the women themselves still had to put in around \$40k, buy their own trailer, and make the build happen.



As Susan puts it: *"It was never about giving away houses. It was about creating an opportunity that these women could grab with both hands. A hand up, not a handout."*

One inheritance. One vision. Fifteen women who now have homes, stability, and a future.

The results? Pretty bloody awesome. Women who'd been couch-surfing or staring down the barrel of homelessness now own their homes. Kids who'd lived out of backpacks now have bedrooms they can actually paint posters on.

Jes, an aged-care worker from the Blue Mountains, summed it up best: *"For the first time in my life, I feel like I can retire without fear. I own my home. That's a sentence I never thought I'd say."*

Lauren, who lost her house in the Lismore floods, said: *"When everything else washed away, this gave me something solid. Something I could rebuild on."*

These aren't just bricks-and-mortar wins. They're life-changing, security-giving transformations.

Now, you may be thinking, "That's all very sweet, but what's it got to do with us?" Everything. Because New Zealand is full of people who could afford a tiny house, but never get the break.

We talk endlessly about housing "solutions" that involve billions of dollars, endless consultations, and new acronyms nobody understands. Meanwhile, Eden proved that you can do something immediately with a fraction of that. An inheritance. A bit of nerve. And suddenly, fifteen families are sorted.

Imagine if we did the same here. If iwi trusts, philanthropists, or even that mysterious "family friend with money" chipped in seed funding, while ordinary Kiwis co-invested in their own homes. Not charity. Not a pity party. Just a fair shot.

Let's be honest: our housing system has turned into that mate who always promises to help you move house, then mysteriously "forgets" on the day. Lovely intentions, zero follow-through.



Susan co-founded the project using money from an inheritance. (Australian Story: David Sciasci)



Lauren built her tiny home next to Wilsons River in northern NSW. (Australian Story: Simon Winter)



Jes and her daughter Eden have named their home 'Tiny Turtle'. (Australian Story: Geoff Kemp)



The founders of the project hope more wealthy individuals will step up to run similar programs. (Australian Story: Winsome Denyer))

The Eden Project is the opposite. It's gritty, it's practical, and it works. Instead of wringing our hands about the "complexity of the problem," it rolled up its sleeves and said: "Right, let's actually put people in homes."

So here's the thing: we need people here in Aotearoa to step up. Not just "someone" you, me, the philanthropists with money in the bank, the trusts with untapped funds, the builders with skills, the landowners with spare space. We need action, not talk. We need courage, not more committees. Because if fifteen women in Australia can turn one inheritance and a lot of grit into a whole new life, then what excuse do we have?

Eden didn't solve Australia's housing crisis. But it lit a match in the dark. And we'd be daft not to carry that flame here.

Want to see it for yourself?

You can watch the full Australian Story episode [Small Wonders](#) to meet the women, hear their stories, and see the homes they built.



While some chose to have their tiny homes built in a factory, Anna was very hands on.



Jes says she no longer feels trapped in housing insecurity. (Australian Story: Winsome Denyer)

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TINY HOUSE ROOKIE MISTAKES (& HOW THE EXPO HELPS YOU AVOID THEM)

By Sharla May

So, picture this: it's 2017, and after months of obsessive planning, spreadsheets, Pinterest boards and one-too-many trips to Mitre 10, I finally had the money together to build my very first tiny house. I was giddy with excitement. I was blogging the whole adventure, imagining my new dream life, smugly picturing myself with minimalist shelves, a composting loo, and not a whiff of mortgage stress in sight.

The delivery day arrived. The truck turned up, my little house perched on top, and I followed behind in my car like a nervous parent escorting a child to their first day of school. At times my heart was thumping so hard I thought I might faint, especially when the driver slammed on the brakes so suddenly smoke billowed off the tyres. He also misjudged a corner, but somehow wrangled the truck and my tiny home back under control. Red flag number one.

Then we arrived at the site. (A spot I'd found on Facebook. And that's when things went... well, pear-shaped doesn't quite cover it. The driver immediately got bogged in the peat soil. Another truck was called in to rescue him, which also got stuck. Six hours later there was digging, shouting, heavy machinery chewing up the landowner's property, and me wondering if I'd made the worst decision of my life.

Just when I thought it couldn't get worse, they managed to scrape the house along a tree, smashing my glass front door. And then, in a move worthy of a sitcom villain, the drivers shrugged and said, "not our problem, to repairing all the damage" before trundling off. The landowner, whose paddock was now a churned-up swamp, decided she didn't want me there anymore. She made my life absolute hell. And I? I was left with broken doors, a broken heart, and absolutely no idea where I stood legally.

That was the moment I realised something: going tiny isn't just about fairy lights, kombucha brewing, and smugly owning less than ten mugs. It's a minefield. Landowners, council rules, builders going bust, houses damaged in transit. And unless you know what you're doing, the odds can be stacked against you.

Which is exactly why I started the Tiny House Expo. The Event exists to help people skip the rookie mistakes, and instead give them the kind of insider knowledge that saves time, money, and quite possibly glass front doors. Think of it as condensing a year of late-night Googling, Facebook group stalking, and tearful phone calls to councils into one neat, glorious weekend.

This year marks the 10th Tiny House Expo, running 31 October–2 November at Mystery Creek. And the programme? Well, it's basically a survival guide disguised as a weekend out. **Check out all the talks happening on the pages below.**

The Expo isn't just about selling houses. It's about protecting people. It's about making sure no one else ends up sobbing on the side of a muddy paddock with smashed glass doors and a furious landowner. It's about turning tiny living from a gamble into a smart plan.

So if you've ever stayed up late, three hours deep into YouTube tours, thinking yes, that could be me! The Expo is where you come to find out how to actually make it happen, *safely*.



**The Tiny House Expo runs
31 October–2 November at
Mystery Creek, Hamilton. Bring
your questions, and your curiosity.**

GRAB TICKETS

Expo Talks 2025

31 Oct - 2 Nov, Mystery Creek Events Centre, Hamilton

[GRAB TICKETS](#)

Tiny Houses, Granny Flats & Council Rules

What's Changing (and What's Not)

Rebecca McLean

Tiny houses and council rules, the romance ends here. Rebecca will cut through the myths, the jargon, and the "my cousin's neighbour said you don't need consent if it's on wheels" nonsense. She'll explain zoning, consents, and what those new granny flat reforms might actually mean for you. Bring your questions, bring your confusion, this is where you'll finally get some straight answers.



From paddocks to villages

How to find the best home
for your Tiny House

It's all very well buying a tiny house, but then comes the big question where on earth do you put it? Ryan will talk you through the art of finding land for your tiny home, what to look for, what to avoid, and the sneaky red flags no one mentions until it's too late. He'll also share the realities of living in a communal tiny house village, the upsides, the downsides, and whether it's actually for you.



Expo Talks 2025

31 Oct - 2 Nov, Mystery Creek Events Centre, Hamilton

[GRAB TICKETS](#)

Beyond the build

Transport, sites and everything in between

Angus Hamilton

You've dreamed it, designed it, and maybe even started building it. But what if your tiny house turns out too heavy, too tall, or too wide to actually move? Angus has seen the transport nightmares, trailers not fit for purpose, homes wedged into impossible sites, budgets blown on avoidable mistakes. He'll show you how to dodge those traps, budget smart, prep your site, and work backwards from moving day so your dream tiny doesn't turn into an immovable nightmare.



Money, Forms & Headaches

How to Actually Finance a Tiny Home

Tim Oliver



Everyone says you can't get financing for a tiny house. Internet forums are full of doom and gloom, and frankly, it's enough to make you want to give up before you've even started. But here's the thing: you can. Tim Oliver will explain how, without the jargon, without the waffle, just the real options, the process, and how to stop feeling utterly lost.

Expo Talks 2025

31 Oct - 2 Nov, Mystery Creek Events Centre, Hamilton

[GRAB TICKETS](#)

The Starting Point

What to Know Before You Go Tiny

Rebecca McLean

Thinking of going tiny? Lovely idea. But before you haul half your belongings to the op shop and start doodling floorplans on café napkins... pause. Rebecca will talk you through the realities: the downsizing, the choices between wheels, cabins, or granny flats, and the things most people only learn the hard way.



How to future-proof your Tiny Home

For every stage of life

Ziski Pöschl



It's one thing designing a tiny home for right now. But what about when life barges in with a partner, a baby, a toddler, and a dog that thinks it owns the sofa? Ziski will share how her family's tiny house has had to bend, stretch and adapt, what's worked, what hasn't, and the surprising ways a small space can still make room for a very big life.

THE 15 WORST TINY HOUSE DESIGN MISTAKES

(AKA HOW TO RUIN YOUR LIFE IN 20M²)



Tiny houses: they're supposed to be clever, elegant, life-simplifying little gems. But instead? Some people have managed to create rolling disasters that look like the set of a student film project called Minimalism Gone Wrong. We've compiled the definitive list of the 15 worst design crimes. Buckle in. Some of you are about to feel very attacked.

15. The Pinterest-Board Explosion

There's whimsical, and then there's the full craft-market-stall nightmare. A little macramé is charming. But when your tiny looks like Etsy sneezed in it, fairy lights, neon wall quotes, clashing tiles, and random "quirky" décor, you've crossed from cosy to chaotic.

14. Loft Ladders of Doom

Yes, loft ladders look whimsical in photos, all twinkly and storybook. But at 3am, half-asleep and desperate for the loo, they're death traps. One wrong step and you're plummeting toward the compost toilet, dignity and ankles destroyed in one go.

13. No Proper Ventilation

Your dream cedar interior will turn into a damp, suffocating cave without proper airflow. Suddenly it smells like wet dog and gym socks, and mould spores march up the walls in triumph. Ventilation isn't optional in a tiny house, it's survival.

12. The Overweight Tiny Home

Some people build like they're constructing the Roman Colosseum on wheels. The result? A "mobile" home that requires specialist heavy haulage trucks every time you want to budge it. Spoiler: your Hilux isn't even in the running. And here's the kicker, if your trailer axles, suspension, or tow ball aren't rated for that monster weight (and let's be honest, they usually aren't), the first accident you have will also be the last time your insurance company takes you seriously. You've not built a tiny house, you've built an immovable liability.



11. A Ridiculous Amount of Windows

"All the windows!" they cry, until they realise they've left themselves no wall space for storage, no privacy from the neighbours, and they're baking like rotisserie chickens every afternoon. Glass is lovely, but four walls of it turns your tiny into a greenhouse with nowhere to put a bookshelf.

10. Overcomplicated Tech

Nothing screams "sustainable off-grid living" like a tiny house that needs three apps, two routers, and Elon Musk's blessing just to switch the lights on. In a space this small, overcomplicated tech isn't futuristic, it's claustrophobic chaos.

9. Bad Bathroom Placement

Bathrooms in the wrong spot can ruin relationships. Stick the loo beside the bed and you'll fall asleep to Eau de Regret. Put it next to the living area and guests sip tea while listening to your bladder. Placement and soundproofing matter.

8. No Soundproofing

Tiny houses without soundproofing are acoustic nightmares. There's nowhere to sneak off for a discreet fart, an argument, or even a phone call. One partner snores, the other hears it like a foghorn. Romance doesn't just fade, it dies with the sound of your digestive system echoing through 20m².

7. Multi-Purpose Furniture That's Bad at Everything

Take the classic sofa-bed. In theory, it's two-in-one genius. In reality, it's a couch with cushions like bricks and a bed that guarantees a chiropractor visit. Just because something folds, flips, or swivels doesn't mean it's good at either job. In a tiny house, multifunctional should mean *comfortable and practical*, not *mediocre at everything*.

6. Ignoring Weight Distribution

Put all your heavy gear, water tank, fridge,

log burner, and cabinetry at one end, and you've created a see-saw on wheels. Your house now lurches like a carnival ride, giving you motion sickness while frying an egg. Outside, it wobbles, and tows like a drunk shopping trolley. Get it wrong and it's not just inconvenient, it's dangerous. Poor balance makes tiny houses absolute hazards on the road. Balance matters.

5. The Bench Space Blind Spot

In a tiny kitchen, people forget you still cook like a normal human. Instead of decent prep space, they cram in cupboards and appliances. Meal prep becomes a balancing act on the sink. Like storage, you can never have enough bench space.

4. Tiny Windows, Tiny Light

Darkness isn't cosy, it's depressing. Too many tiny houses are cave-like, lit only by fairy lights and desperation. If the only daylight sneaks in under the door, you haven't built a home; you've built a coffin. Add windows, save your sanity.

3. Skimping on Insulation

Skipping insulation is a rookie crime that turns winters into survival tests. Living in one of these tin cans feels like camping in a fridge. Builders who do this should be made to live in them, in Invercargill, during July.

2. Awkward Layouts That Forget You're Human

Some layouts treat humans like possums, climbing, crouching, and contorting. Beds you can't sit up in, doors that smash into furniture (or knees), storage that requires gymnastics. Designing for actual people, with limbs and spines, shouldn't be revolutionary. Yet here we are.

1. The "Forever Temporary" Mindset

The deadliest mistake: treating your house like a festival tent. Bargain-bin materials, quick fixes, and Instagrammable gimmicks age like milk. It looks fine on delivery day, but within months you're Googling: "is it normal if my walls peel when it rains?"

Bad tiny house design isn't just irritating, it's tragic. It's how the whole movement gets laughed at by the haters ("See, I told you they're just sheds on trailers"). So if you see yourself in any of the above, don't take it personally. Or actually, do. Fix it.



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



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 \$200 per week

- **Available:** Now
- **Site foundation:** Grass
- **Water connection:** Yes
- **Power connection:** Yes
- **Off-street parking:** Yes
- **Pets:** Yes
- **Child Friendly:** Yes
- **Smokers:** Yes
- **WiFi connection:** Yes
- **Private location:** Yes



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NEW

LOOKING FOR LAND

Christchurch, Canterbury



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 **CHRISTCHURCH**

Looking for:

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

We're a quiet, reliable couple with a well-behaved dog seeking a long-term spot in or around Christchurch to park our caravan. We work in town but want to live simply and off-grid, with access to water for refilling our tank. We're drama-free, respectful, and easy to get along with—looking for a peaceful place to call home..



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