

frequently asked questions

Here is a list of our most commonly asked questions. We hope you'll find the answers you need below. If not, please contact us.

About us

1. What is Korinderie Ridge?

*"The Ridge" is a rural **land** sharing **co-operative** located in The Gap, on the north coast of NSW. It is an intentional community, established over 40 years ago. Its members share roughly 500 acres of largely uncleared native forest, woodland and wetland habitats. We embrace a cooperative system which moves from private ownership of land to shared custodianship. Learn more about our history [here](#).*

2. Who lives there?

Currently, there are 22 adults and 17 children living across 13 private houses. The property has council approval for up to 18 houses. Owning a share of Korinderie entitles you to own or build one council approved dwelling. We are a diverse bunch, who share a common love for this land.

3. What does the name "Korinderie" mean?

The original group named the Ridge 'Koninderie', an Aboriginal word for Rainbow. The name was accidentally changed to Korinderie following a slip of the chisel on the sign that hangs above our entrance!

Living at Korinderie

4. What do you do together as a community?

We come together for a weekly meal, fortnightly workdays and formal meetings every two months. We also organise events such as our annual Regen Week and Cabaret show. Informally many of us catch to exercise together, car pool, dinners, to lend a hand weeding or building, playdates etc.

5. Are these activities mandatory?

Engagement in community activities are optional, as feelings of reluctant obligation are not a great basis for community cohesion. That said, we've created a culture of participation because we love to co-create and hang out together. People are welcome to contribute in whatever way they can.

6. Who takes care of the infrastructure and shared spaces?

We all do. We equally share the responsibility of caring for, and maintaining the communal areas and infrastructure (roads, orchard, community garden, community centre and equipment). We often do these jobs on workdays, and these form an important part of our relationship with the land and each other. From time-to-time we need to get things done outside of workdays.

7. How does the community make decisions?

While we aim to have everyone in agreement, decisions are decided by a majority vote at one of six formal meetings per year. Any day-to-day things that crop up are discussed by group email. All residents, (including children and non-members) participate in discussions and decision-making processes. All decisions are transparent and inclusive.

8. How does the community manage conflicts?

Conflict is not a dirty word! We consider conflicts and different points of view as 'healthy,' and an opportunity to access the wisdom of the group. We strive to be good listeners and communicate with compassion and respect. That said, we do have formal dispute resolution processes outlined in the Rules (Section 13), just in case.

9. Can we have pets on the community?

We have a no dog and cat policy. This is because we value conservation and strive to reduce our impact on the native flora and fauna. Some flexibility can be applied on a case-by-case basis to newcomers.

10. Is the co-operative exclusively about environment conservation?

No, but it is one of our core values. As outlined in the Rules, "the primary activity of co-operative is to enable all members to live in a co-operative community on land owned by the co-operative while conserving the natural resources and environment of that land."

11. If I'm not purchasing one of the existing 12 houses, where can I build?

All new house site locations must be approved by the cooperative at a general meeting. Korinderie Ridge has a Development Plan (DP) and designated zones. All new house sites will need to be located within the residential zone of the DP. Not all areas of the property are suitable for building, this could be due to topographical restraints or because of its conservation value. To assist interested parties, six potential areas for possible house sites, but choosing one of these will still require final approval at a meeting. The Secretary can provide you with a copy of the DP on request.

12. If I purchase a share without a dwelling on it, can I design and build my own house and what building approvals do I need?

Yes, you will have to design and build your own house to meet the general Australian standards for building and the regulations of the Richmond Valley Council. This includes

things like a wastewater management system and planning for bushfire protection, as we are on 'bushfire prone land'. You will need all relevant approvals prior to commencing.

13. Where do I get water and power from, and how do you manage sewerage?

Dam water is supplied to all existing house sites for garden use. Installing dam waterlines to new house sites are optional. Associated costs and labor will need to be met by the newcomers but its likely that lots of members will be willing to lend a hand

As Korinderie Ridge is fully off-grid town services are not available. This means all households harvest rain water and solar energy. You will need to manage your own wastewater, sewerage and waste (recycling, landfill, etc.) too.

14. How much of the 500 acres is mine for personal use?

There is no specific answer to this question. Talk to the community about how much space you need and what you can maintain. Of course, our love of the bush means that any large-scale activities or expansive clearings are out. Most dwellings have a modest size house, a small garden and a shed. We don't have conventional boundary fences around our house sites. The only fences we have are to prevent the wildlife from entering our food gardens.

15. Can I borrow money from the bank to finance my house?

This is something you'll need to look into. We're not aware of anyone being able to obtain a traditional mortgage from a bank because the co-operative owns the land, not the individual.

16. If I purchase or build a dwelling, will I be able to sell on the open market, to whomever I like?

No. You may only sell your Ridge assets (the share, dwellings, sheds, etc.) to someone who has been approved for membership (i.e., voted in). This means that sales of shares and houses are dependent on voting on a new member.

17. Is Ridge life all about rainbows and unicorns (beers and skittles)?

Nope. Ridge life has wonderful aspects to it, but it has its challenges too. Isolation, limited employment opportunities, poor soil, unreliable phone reception, extreme weather conditions, and hard physical work are some of the things you need to consider as you explore whether Korinderie is right for you.

Legal structure

18. Is Korinderie Ridge approved by council?

Korinderie is a council approved multiple occupancy that can have up to 18 dwellings. Each shareholder is entitled to build and occupy one council approved dwelling.

19. Is the co-operative registered?

Yes. Korinderie was registered as a co-operative in April 1982 under National Law (NSW). You can read more about co-operatives [here](#).

20. Is there a hierarchy within the community?

No. All members of a co-operative have equal status and voting rights. Joint members are entitled to one vote.

21. Who owns the land?

Korinderie Ridge Co-operative Limited holds title to the land and operates under “the Rules of the Co-operative” and by-laws. You can request a copy of these from the Secretary secretary@korinderie.org.au.

Membership

22. How can I join Korinderie Ridge?

You can get a slice of rural paradise for the cost of the share purchased from a current shareholder. If you're purchasing a house, this is an additional cost which is negotiated between you and an outgoing shareholder. You may only purchase a share after a lengthy 'getting to know you' process and if you're approved for membership by 80% of members at a meeting. You can read more about the application process [here](#).

23. How do I get 'approved for membership'?

A completed [application form](#) is submitted to the Secretary. Once received, the co-operative has 6 months to bring your application to a general meeting and decide by vote. Procedures for dealing with applications for membership are outlined in section 72 of the Rules.

24. How long does the membership process take? Can I fast track it?

It's not in your best interests to try and fast track the process. If members feel rushed, or haven't spent enough time with you they're likely to vote “no”. The emphasis is getting to know one another and the lifestyle, and this takes time. While members consider whether you're a good fit, it's important that you're aware of the realities and challenges of living here.

25. When is a good time to apply?

Your Liaison person will help guide you on the best timing.