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MOVING DOWN UNDER



Meet the mover

NAMES

Noleen Wilson (34), Phil Wilson (36), and children Levi (3), Mathew (2) and Faith (5)

OCCUPATION

In Ireland, Phil was a photographer for a newspaper and Noleen was a dietician. In New Zealand, Noleen works as a dietician for a local hospital. Phil is currently looking after the kids while job-hunting.

MOVED FROM

County Armagh, Northern Ireland

MOVED TO

Thames, New Zealand

FURTHER INFO

The Emigration Group 0845 230 4391, www.emigrationgroup.co.uk



New family start

The outdoors lifestyle of New Zealand's Coromandel proved the perfect choice for a family's new start...

Phil Wilson, his wife Noleen and kids Faith, Levi and Mathew left County Omagh in Northern Ireland six months ago to start a new life in Thames, on the North Island of New Zealand and haven't looked back since.

An old historic mining town, Thames is on New Zealand's picturesque Coromandel Peninsular, which is renowned for its pristine beaches and rainforest.

Noleen says: "We really love the laid back lifestyle here. We both get much more time to spend with the kids and because of the better climate we get to enjoy the outdoors more."

"Back in Ireland we were often put off getting out and about because of the weather, but here we regularly go down to the beach or into the countryside, and in general, we're all quite active."

The family decided to move to New Zealand for a number of reasons, primarily because they wanted to enjoy a better lifestyle and climate.

Noleen says: "We started thinking about emigrating a few years ago, because we wanted a change of pace and to experience living in a different country."

"We were particularly interested in New Zealand, and after taking a six week tour of the country a few years ago we decided it was the place for us. We thought that the people were really friendly and the scenery was fantastic."

The first thing Noleen and Phil did was get the advice of an emigration specialist. Noleen says: "Once we decided where we wanted to go and looked at the job opportunities there, we consulted The Emigration Group, whose advice proved invaluable."

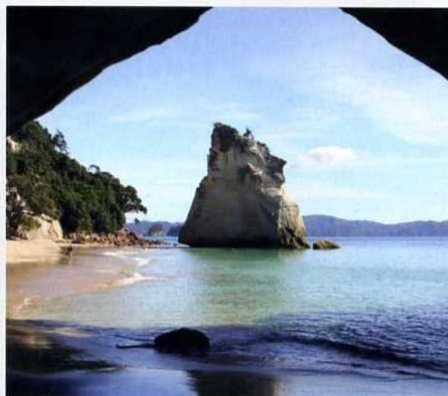
"One of the hardest parts of the emigration process was collating the paperwork, but with the help of The Emigration Group, everything went smoothly. They took a lot of the stress out of the process and allowed us to concentrate on other issues, such as selling the properties we had in Ireland and looking at career opportunities in NZ."

Below The family's two storey home in Thames boasts great sea views



“Within 12 months of applying we had our residency visa. We could have actually had it sooner but we delayed the process because we were trying to tie up loose ends back in Ireland.”

With the visas through, the family left for Thames in New Zealand, where Noleen was offered a job as a dietician in the local hospital. She says: “Phil and I were actually considering living on the South Island and had invested in a vineyard there, however, with properties still to sell back in



“Emigrating to a different country is a big decision and you should visit it first”

Ireland we weren't at the stage to develop the vineyard, so I looked for a job as a dietician and one came up in Thames.”

She says: “This proved to be a real help to us, because as part of the job they offered a relocation package, which really helped.”

SEA VIEWS

Noleen and Phil are now living in a rented two storey house in Thames, which is conveniently close to the local shops and the beach.

She says: “Our new home has great sea views but is in walking distance of work and all the amenities of Thames. We are also really close to some fabulous national parks, yet only an hour and half from major cities like Hamilton and Auckland.”

According to Noleen the local community has been really open to the family and they've found it easy to make friends.

She says: “People in Thames have been very welcoming to us as a family. I've met lots of friends through work and Phil has made lots of friends through the kids being in local clubs and going to the local nursery. It's surprised us all how fast we've become part of the community.”

Above (left to right) Local beauty spots include the famous Cathedral Cove; The children love to spend time on the beach

She says: “After making so many friends in Thames we realise that we want to stay here.”

A typical day for the couple involves Phil looking after the kids at home while Noleen works at the hospital. At weekends the family will often head to the beach or to some of the local parks.

Noleen says: “Even in the winter the weather is still warm enough to go and enjoy a picnic on the beach, or visit some of the amazing scenery on the Coromandel Peninsular. In the summer we will look forward to going camping at weekends. New Zealand is really well set up for any outdoor activity and there are lots of camping spots next to some of Coromandel's best beaches which will be great places to stay.”

When asked if they have any regrets, Noleen says: “There is honestly nothing I regret about moving to New Zealand. The only thing I would say is that we do miss family. Having Skype has proved to be really helpful, because we can talk and see family for free.

“When I've been feeling a bit homesick it's been good to see and have a chat with my mum, even if it is via a computer.”

For anyone considering emigrating Noleen advises that they should get professional help and put the research in.

She says: “The first thing we did was get professional advice

and I would recommend other people do the same. The Emigration Group helped us negotiate the visa application minefield and allowed us to concentrate on other important issues involved with the move.

“I also think people should visit the place they intend to live.

Emigrating to a different country is a big decision and you should visit it first to get a feel for what will be your new home.”

Noleen adds: “My final bit of advice to anyone is that you only live once, so if you are thinking about emigrating, go for it. It's better to do that than to regret never going.” 🇳🇿

“Our Coromandel pros and cons”

Pros

- ✓ Fantastic outdoor lifestyle
- ✓ The sunny, warm climate
- ✓ People here are friendly and outgoing
- ✓ The cost of living is cheaper
- ✓ There is easy access to outdoor activities

Cons

- ✗ The wages are lower than in the UK
- ✗ It's expensive to fly back home for visits
- ✗ Missing friends and family