

[REDACTED]

From: Inquiry into the Retirement Housing Sector POV eSubmission Form
<cso@parliament.vic.gov.au>
Sent: Wednesday, 8 June 2016 5:15 PM
To: LSIC
Subject: New Submission to Inquiry into the Retirement Housing Sector

Inquiry Name: Inquiry into the Retirement Housing Sector

Ms Jeanette Bosci
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

SUBMISSION CONTENT:

--

Retirement villages are promoted as offering the residents security and peace of mind in a low maintenance environment.

By their very nature retirement villages, even those that only offer "independent living" as opposed to part or full care, attract people who are at or who are entering a more vulnerable stage in their life. As the residents' age they often suffer from increasing health problems and generally become less "resilient" and less able to deal with stress.

In my own case I entered an "independent living" retirement village at the minimum entry age of 55 when I was diagnosed with disabling whole body arthritis (due to a genetic condition). While I don't yet need full time care, I could no longer cope with routine property maintenance.

Like many villages, the one where I live is occupied by the residents on a loan/lease contract where a deferred management fee is deducted from the selling price when the resident eventually leaves the village.

Many promises were made verbally by the village managers about what services would be provided by the owning/operating company; unfortunately the contracts are somewhat vague in their wording and over time the company seems to want to take less and less responsibility for property maintenance.

For example, after I moved in the company announced at a general meeting of residents in July of 2011, that they would no longer accept responsibility for repairing or replacing faulty hot water systems. This decision was backdated so that it would apply to any contract signed from the January of that year. As the only resident in the village at that time who had taken up occupancy after that date (I signed my contract in mid-February 2011) this was of little consequence to other residents at that meeting. In August of that same year the 15+ year old hot water system in my unit stopped working and I had to pay out over \$1,000 to have it replaced.

What I find most annoying is that if I was renting a property in a normal tenancy situation I would have more protection than I do as a loan/lease resident in a retirement village. If I was renting a property I would expect the owner to provide and maintain working hot water system, working cooking appliances and generally maintain the property in reasonable condition. As a resident in a retirement village the responsibility for maintaining the property in livable condition seems to fall increasingly onto the resident.

--

File1:

File2:

File3: