

Rec 10/6/16

TO ----- Legal & Social Issues Committee

Parliament House, Spring Street, East Melbourne. Vic 3002

REFERENCE [REDACTED] (address hereunder).

DOMAINE VILLAGE

[REDACTED]
7th JUNE, 2016

This my personal submission to the Legal & Social Committee with reference to some "grievances" that folk in this village have had to endure since being taken over by AVEO.

A little background to my life is that I have just turned 80 years old; my parents lived through the great depression, and then World War 2: we were VERY poor, but my family worked hard and, as children, myself and three brothers were given as much help, love and assistance as our parents could give, given their circumstances. My husband and myself worked ourselves though school and university; proudly now I am a self-funded retiree, running my own Self-Managed superannuation fund. Sadly I have had a few set-backs in life, my husband passing away in 2001 with prostate cancer, my first born son passing away in 2006 with asbestos related lung cancer, and my second born son also passing away in 2012 with pancreatic cancer.

After the death of my second son, I "sort of" fell to pieces for a little while but due to the love of my third son, we found Domaine, where I could feel at home, in caring surroundings with other folk with similar interests and lifestyles and ages. But most of all, I was looking for a safe environment; and I wanted SO MUCH to feel "at home".

Fortunately, I was able to buy into Domaine; I now live in an apartment, overlooking the bowling green. That was almost 4 years ago. My health had improved, and I was beginning to feel, really feel, - at home. Now at my age and what I have been though (and there are more negatives that I have not mentioned) - my 'home' is beginning to crumble due to the sale of this building to AVEO. AVEO is listed on the stock market, so their first priority is their shareholders, and sadly the residents come second.

Domaine is a very comfortable and attractive place to live; the people who live here are amazing - we all pull together and help each-other.

Gradually, but surely, our home is turning into an “institution”. An independent survey conducted almost a year ago, showed the satisfaction level has dropped from 96% to 68% in the first 12 months – and definitely it has dropped considerably more since then. We have VERY active committees – who keep our village alive. I am fortunate to be one of 12 committee members who form the Resident’s Committee. ALL OUR COMMITTEE MEMBERS ARE VOLUNTEERS GIVING NOT ONLY THEIR TIME BUT ALL COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH RUNNING THAT COMMITTEE AND THEIR “FUNCTIONS”

1. A well stocked and maintained library, computer area;
2. village activities
3. Pizza nights and Toastie lunches: these very popular activities are very well supported by a large number of residents. Management tried to stop this activity by imposing tight regulations (health and safety issues) HOWEVER, these were being adhered to.
4. Afternoon teas; especially on Sundays to welcome new residents.
5. Various card games plus Bingo etc.
6. Free meditation classes – weekly (a resident gives of her time and expertise to do these)
7. An amazing Kiosk, staffed, maintained etc. by volunteers
8. A dedicated, very busy Social Committee, organising various functions to bring people together especially some who are alone and lonely. All volunteers.
9. A very active craft group; who make items for the Kiosk
10. A great Men’s shed – again making toys and other items for family and for sale; this facility was “almost” lost recently due to stringent regulations being enforced by AVEO WITHOUT ANY CONSULTATION.
11. There is one resident, who gives freely of her time and expertise to play the piano in our lounge area – and residents experience community singing like you never see anymore – everyone is SO happy.
12. And I am sure I have left some important items off this list.
13. I MUST MENTION OUR AMAZING “Morning Tea” for cancer – where, this year alone, in one day we raised \$6,125:00

ALL PROCEEDS FROM OUR FUND RAISING GOES BACK DIRECTLY INTO THE VILLAGE LIFESTYLE, providing “little things” and some very expensive items that we have provided ourselves. I’m trying to think of something positive that AVEO has given us, since it has been our “manager”!!!

The management makes decisions without any consultation. We are treated like second class citizens – like little people who have nothing to say. People who want to be heard, want our opinions to be taken into consideration – but this all falls on deaf ears.

There is SO much more to say – but, we have no-one to say it to. We are hoping that you can point us “where to go” and what can we do to get our previous lifestyle village back the way it was before AVEO took over.

WE NEED A VOICE. With the ageing population percentages of retirees – growing every year, something MUST be done.

I thank you for taking the time to read my notes. We would welcome a visit to our “home”. We would welcome a forum to discuss our side of the story.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]

(Mrs) Katherine SHAW

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