

Legislative Council Standing Committee on Legal and Social Issues  
Inquiry into the Retirement Housing Sector  
Parliament of Victoria  
Spring Street  
East Melbourne  
VIC 3002

Monday 18th April 2016

Dear Sir/Madam,

My mother, Lorna Roberts owned and lived in a retirement village owned by Aveo until she died on 28th May 2014. After complying with their regulations for re-furbishing the property, it was ready to go on the market for sale in September 2014.

By January 2016 when there had been no action or contact, I initiated contact with the Sales Manager. After meeting with him, I was informed that a new marketing program was being embarked on. They would also furnish my mother's property to allow photographs and advertise the apartment on their website. Aveo would also provide regular updates concerning prospective buyers and the marketing program. This was in accordance with the requirements of the Retirement Villages Act 1986.

Repeated mistakes in listing the property with incorrect prices, omitting photographs and never initiating contact with me followed over the next 9 months. During all this time, we did not receive one marketing report. The furniture and photographs took over 4 months to be put in place. Meanwhile, the estate was paying the deferred management fee of over \$2,000 per month on an empty property. In September 2015, in desperation, I listed the property with a local real estate agent. Although this did not result in a sale, the professionalism I encountered was encouraging.

In October 2015, the board of Aveo decided to buy back all empty properties in the village, of which there were now twenty. The purchase of my mother's apartment was finalised early in 2016 - almost 20 months after her death.

Throughout this episode, I was extremely disturbed at the complete lack of professionalism and the apparent lack of incentive to actively engage in selling my mother's apartment. The collection of substantial monthly management fees appears to far outweigh any efforts to sell the property. I feel the Act is heavily slanted in favour of the owners of retirement villages and shows little respect to the inhabitants or families having to endure this experience.

Kind regards

Diana Lawrence