

23 May 2016
Russell Nilsson

[REDACTED]
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By email [REDACTED]

Access to Justice review
Department of Justice and regulation

I was a resident in the [REDACTED], from January 2012 until October 2014. On leaving the village in 2014 I rented a unit in [REDACTED] before buying my own unit in June 2015. I have 2 [two] items that I would like to discuss.

1. Steps on front and rear entries

2. Shower Bases

After moving into my Village unit, I found that my front steps were of an illegal height, [according to building regulations]. The manager, [REDACTED], was asked to put in a ramp or to alter the steps. He refused my request, so the senior manager, [REDACTED] was called in only to get the same result. As I recently had a hip replacement and the prospect of knee surgery in the near future, I told both of them as I thought the steps were illegal in height I would have no option but to sue [REDACTED] if those front steps cause me to have an accident. They then decided to build a concrete landing incorporated in the steps, which I might add, made it easier for me to negotiate the steps. There are specific measurements for steps in the building regulations but it would appear that they have not been followed in this village; the heights vary making them, in my opinion, illegal. They also install back steps [3] at the rear entrance/exit of the unit without a landing before the steps are to be negotiated in other words you step out of the unit straight onto the steps. A number of residents have, at their own expense have installed landings, and or ramps, so that walking frames can be better accommodated or for own personal safety. Management has resisted the installation of ramps at the front entrance.

2. As a senior resident coming into this type of "life style living" consideration of safety, quality of life and emergency access is most important. Size of the shower recess, including a step into or out of, is undesirable. As a retired plumber I came across many units that were not properly constructed and as a result caused problems with leaking, rotting timber, mildew and associated problems. If these units had been constructed in accordance with regulations many of these problems would have been avoided.

I believe that these are only two of the reasons why we need an Ombudsman so that people in their twilight years can have their voice heard and their problem solved without the expense of solicitor fees or going Consumer Affairs or VCAT.

I am prepared to attend the hearing and expand further to what I have written.

Yours Sincerely

Russell Nilsson