

# RETIREMENT VILLAGES ACT REVIEW 2019

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Below are some areas that I believe need some stronger consideration in your review. There are many different types of community villages today varying from retirement villages to lifestyle villages but all revolve around older Australians. I believe village lifestyle contributes to the health and wellbeing of older people, and it also frees-up larger homes for families.

1. When an entire village is sold to another owner then it should be law that the village remains a village. If a developer wants to build residential homes on the property what would happen to the older current residence? They would be forced to try and sell with a much reduced price and that would not be enough to buy elsewhere. This uncertain knowledge is very stressful to the residence and they need more protection.

Also, these new laws should apply to owners/developers whether they live here in Victoria, other states or overseas. How strong will your laws be to cover this?

2. Maintenance of village common areas. Owners/developers should have a liability by law to maintain the village to a standard that it was when residence buy into the village. Not let the gardens become shabby. Not let the swimming pool have rusty handrails etc. etc. and have an overall neglected appearance. This is one of many reasons we buy into this lifestyle and it is not cheap to do so.
3. Maintenance of residential properties. This is a big concern of residents. There is a 15 year structural warranty on properties in our village. But what does this mean? When an issue of concern is raised, it should be dealt with to the satisfaction of both sides, not left to drag out for months. The residents then become tired of waiting and arguing with **management** and thus pay for the repairs themselves. There should be a law that either the owner/developer pays for repairs in a **timely manner** or reimburses the resident when they eventually pay to get it done themselves.
4. Contract to purchase. These should be made more concise and easier to read and understand. I have learnt that there is a big difference between the first buyers who buy the units from the owner/developer and the second buyers of the same units who then buy their units from the current owners of these units. The obligations of the owner/developer of these village units is then drastically changed in relation to maintenance of these second or more owned units. This should be clearly detailed and **explained in depth** to prospective new buyers.
5. Death or moving on. Residents weekly fees should be capped at **2 to 3 months only**. Not ongoing until sold. (in this village these fees had to continue to be paid for nearly 12 months **by the family** after their mother died until the residence was sold). This is particularly pertinent too when moving into a nursing home (note: no one is living in these units during this time). Also, the owners/developers of these villages should be seen to aggressively be trying to sell these properties not sitting back just collecting weekly fees anyway.

I am aware that there are other issues but these are of most concern to most residence living in villages. If you wish to speak to me, you are welcome to do so.

Kind regards

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