

WARVRA Newsletter

October 2013

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WARVRA

NOTICE OF GENERAL MEETING

The next General Meeting of the Association will be held at the
Piney Lakes Environmental Education Centre, Leach Highway, Winthrop
(The entry to the centre is on the south side of Leach Highway between Murdoch Drive and Winthrop Drive)

FRIDAY 8 NOVEMBER 2013 at 10.00 am

GUEST SPEAKER: Mr Noel Forster

Village Wise

Noel is an Account Manger for Jardine Lloyd Thompson, insurance brokers.
Village Wise contents cover for Retirement Village residents is provided under a
JLT Discretionary Trust which an innovative alternative to conventional insurance.
Noel will explain the features and benefits of this product.

BUSINESS:

President's Report

Treasurer's Report

Legislation Update

Seminar Planning for 2014

Members' Issues

SEMINARS 2014

Seminars are one of our most important services to our Members

What do you want us to provide in 2014?

Topics under consideration are:

- State Administrative Tribunal—when and how?
- Aged Care in Retirement Villages
- Budgets and Accounts—how to read them
- Residents Committees—how to make it work

DO YOU HAVE ANY OTHER SUGGESTIONS?

LET US KNOW—SPEAK UP AT THE NEXT MEETING or SEND AN EMAIL

Western Australian Retirement Villages Residents Association Inc

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WARVRA COMMITTEE DIRECTORY 2013-14

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THE QUARTER'S NEWS IN SUMMARY

- WARVRA is a member of the steering committee for research being conducted by the University of WA in regard to security of tenure for seniors. A summary of the research findings on Retirement Villages has now been prepared. Sadly, most of the findings are merely a repetition of issues raised in the 2010 Final Report of the Retirement Villages legislation.
- We have done a substantial amount of work in increasing the content on our website (warvra.org.au) over the last few months—check it out. Our goal is to build it up so that it becomes an immediate source of information for residents and potential residents. If you have any suggestions for material that should be included or suggestions for improvement to what already exists, please email us on warvra@gmail.com or use the contact page on the website itself!
- The Committee has approved a new Information Paper on the proposed new rules for time-capping the payment of recurrent charges by former non-owner residents which includes a template to assist former residents or their representatives to go through the process required systematically and document the steps they have taken to comply. We are not releasing this paper just yet until a little more information is received from the Dept. of Commerce on exact wordings of the new regulations. When the situation is clearer, the paper will be made widely available and included on the website.
- As reported last quarter, Consumer Protection has a new Minister. We made an appointment to meet the Minister but it was cancelled at the last minute. A useful discussion was held with his Principal Policy Adviser, Martin Connelly, who certainly demonstrated that he understands the issues that we have raised in regard to the delay of the completion of the legislative changes. We are intending to invite the Minister to be the guest speaker at our annual general meeting in February 2014.
- The COTA operated Seniors Housing Centre will close at the end of the year—as part of its austerity drive, the Dept. of Commerce will not renew the contract and even the Department's own centre will have to operate with drastically reduced staffing.

COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

The February meeting is when we elect our new committee. Members are elected for a two year term—those continuing are Colin Edwards (*Bethany Waters*), Julia Lynch (*River Pines*) and Denise Nicolay (*RAAFA, Erskine*). Those whose terms end are Des Cousins (*Harbourside*), Bernard Francis (*Jacaranda Gardens*), Ron Hasluck (*Forest Lakes*), Ron Lullfitz (*Mercy*), David Street (*Lady Brand*), Rob Waite (*Arcadia Waters*) and Brian Davies (*St Ives Centro*). They are eligible for re-election if nominated. There will be at least two vacancies as Bernie Francis and Rob Waite have indicated that they do not intend to nominate. Nominations close on Friday, 24 January 2014. A nomination form may be found on the website.

WARVRA ACTIVITIES

LEGISLATION REPORT

The long process of completing the new Regulations and amendments to the Code following the passing of the Retirement Villages Amendment Act 2012 coming towards its conclusion and all the parts should be in place by about April 2014.

Following our lobbying program which you, our faithful members, supported by contacting your local MP's, while we had questions asked in Parliament and sent letters and made visits to the Minister's office, the process has suddenly gained a new momentum when it seemed it had all but stopped.

Our most recent meetings with Consumer Protection Division officers and the Department's public statement in "Retirement Villages Update—Issue 1" have confirmed that the process is on track for the Amendment Act, the amended Regulations and a new Code to be proclaimed at the end of this year to come into effect on 1 April 2014.

The Current State of Play—CODE

The Dept. of Commerce has reviewed the 20 submissions received on the Code Consultation Paper sent out in June 2013. It is not changing most of its proposals but called a meeting of the stakeholders on 16 October 2013 to discuss some small amendments and a couple of major clarifications.

- The statement on "genuine consultation" has been simplified and drafted to imply that both operators and residents need to participate in genuine consultation.
- The Dept. was concerned that the provision for requesting a secret ballot (2 or more residents) could lead to many ballots and consequent delays in meetings while ballot papers were prepared and then counted. It accordingly proposed that secret ballots would only be required if a simple majority (more than 50%) were in favour. We suggested this was "overkill" and that simple ballots could be quickly arranged at residents' meetings. (It is good practice for the chair or secretary to always have some prepared blank ballot papers ready.) Our position seems to be acceptable to all.
- The code will make it clear that in a dispute the costs that arise from the appointment of a suitable person to assist in resolving the dispute or costs arising from the Commissioner referring a dispute to mediation will be shared equally by both parties, except when the person appointed is an employee of the administering body there will be no charge passed onto residents. The administering body may not pass on its share of costs to the residents through recurrent or individual charges.
- Refurbishment costs have been a continuing matter of concern to residents. The Code will be amended so that refurbishment will be limited to reinstatement works with refurbishment being expressly prohibited AND resident will have the right to apply to SAT before or after reinstatement works commence.

- The terms relating to refurbishment will be defined:

"reinstatement" means undertaking maintenance and/or repairs of an insubstantial nature to residential premises formerly occupied by a resident by returning them to a reasonable state of repair";

"repairs of an insubstantial nature" may include cleaning or replacing the carpet or repainting the residential premises"; and

"renovation" means undertaking repairs or making alterations to the residential premises that are of a substantial nature and more than necessary for the purpose of returning the premises to a reasonable state of repair. It includes restoring, renewing or reconstructing the residential premises".

- Finally, a most desirable improvement is to require a greater level of disclosure to improve the transparency of village operating costs and expenditure from reserve funds. The Code will require certain items of income and expenditure to be separately disclosed and notes to be prepared to explain significant variations from the budget. (Many villages already do this, but some need to "encourage" to be more transparent.) The operators seem to have agreed that the method of calculation of management costs should be disclosed in notes to the budget and accounts.

The Current State of Play—SECTIONS 23-25

- The policy settings on this section have been completed. We are reasonably happy with all these except for one.
- In section 25, regulations are to be made to prohibit collection of certain costs from residents collectively through recurrent charges or levies. We have consistently advocated that these should include the cost of membership of professional association and the cost of accreditation. The Department of Commerce is proposing that such charges be permissible to a maximum of 50% of the actual charges.
- We are protesting this proposal and have arranged a meeting the Departmental Officers on Wednesday 23 October 2013 to attempt to convince them that this is unfair.
- If we are not successful in our meeting with them, we will consider what action should be taken at our next General Meeting. We consider this matter to one of major principle in our campaign to limit recurrent charges to those costs required for the day-to-day running of the village.

The Current State of Play—SECTION 14A

- The working group has not met since 10 April 2013. Considerable progress was made then but we are anxiously awaiting a further meeting which has been promised shortly.

BITS AND PIECES

DEFIBRILLATORS

A defibrillator is a portable electronic device used to send an electrical current through the heart of someone in cardiac arrest. It is safe to use and designed to be easily used by an ordinary person.



An automated external defibrillator, open and ready for pads to be attached

It is designed to recognise only particular heart rhythms that require defibrillation, thus making it impossible to accidentally defibrillate someone who doesn't need it.

Early defibrillation can triple a patient's chance of survival. Every retirement village ought to invest in one.

ONECOTA October 2013

CONSUMER DIRECTED CARE (CDC)

CDC is being introduced in home care packages in aged care, as a result of recent government reforms.

CDC aims to give people who have a home care package more control over their own lives. Services provided under CDC are designed around what someone believes will help them live independently at home [which includes a retirement village]. They can make choices about what services they want, who will deliver them and when. It will also be possible for individuals to take on some of the management of the services provided if they wish to do so.

At this stage, CDC will only be available in newly funded home care packages but all home care packages will have to be provided this way as from 1 July 2015. Existing packages are likely to be progressively converted over the next two years.

HOW SAFE IS YOUR COMPUTER?



Cyber crime cost Australian's \$4.8 billion last year!

Here are some general tips for computer, tablet or smartphone users to help you avoid online traps.

- Make sure you have an up to date firewall, anti-virus and anti-spyware software and back up important data regularly.
- Check web addresses are secure (look for https and the closed padlock symbol).
- Make sure sites are not fake versions – type the known URL in to your browser.
- Stop and think before clicking links or opening attachments.
- Do not respond to emails asking you to update secure personal information or to stop accounts from being deactivated etc. The link is likely to activate malware (malicious software) so that your identity details can be stolen.
- Change all passwords regularly using strong letter and number combinations and different passwords for different uses.
- Always log out after each online banking session.
- Take care when transacting online – use safe payment methods e.g. secure systems like PayPal and avoid wire (money) transfer systems which are virtually untraceable.

For more information on cyber security, check out www.staysmartonline.gov.au

LIFEMARK VILLAGE SCHEME

Lend Lease and Bethanie are the first two organisations to sign up to have their retirement villages evaluated under the new Lifemark Village Scheme. This is the accreditation scheme replacing the former RVA scheme.



VILLAGE GROUP MEMBERSHIP

Numbers are strength! We need more members to be credible!

Why not join WARVRA as a Village Group Member?

Just \$2 per year per village residence