

WARVRA Newsletter


WARVRA

Election of WARVRA Committee 2017

The Annual General Meeting of WARVRA will be held on Friday 10 February 2017. At that meeting the WARVRA Committee for the coming year will be elected. The constitution provides for a committee of ten members, elected for two year terms, some retiring each year. The Committee elects the President and office-bearers and may co-opt up to two additional members of the Committee.

These committee members were elected in February 2016 and their term of office continues until February 2018: **Des Cousins** (Harbourside, Mindarie), **Ian Nordeck** (St Ives, Mandurah), **Val Brown** (Affinity, Baldivis) and **Bob Hamilton** (St Ives, Mandurah).

The term of office for these members ends in February 2017: **Colin Edwards** (Halls Head Village, Halls Head), **Julia Lynch** (Murray River Village, Dudley Park), **Verelle Ward** (Parklands, Woodlands) and **Arthur McCarthy** (Meath Mews, Trigg).

Please nominate members that are able to help with our workload. We particularly need members able to represent WARVRA in visits to villages and in helping residents solve their problems (advocacy).

Nominations close on Friday 20 January 2017 with the Secretary
Val Brown, Secretary

A Training Program

We advised earlier that we intended to conduct a training program to help in recruiting more helpers in membership extension and education visits to villages and to help with legislation and advocacy. We conducted the program over 5 weeks in September and October 2016 with 13 participants. I did two sessions on the main issues in the legislation and Ian Nordeck led the other session on visiting villages and engaging with residents (and some managers) on the importance of WARVRA membership and helping resident groups understand important aspects of village life. Ian and I appreciated the support of President Colin and Vice President Verelle in these sessions.

For the training program, I prepared a "Guide to the WA Retirement Villages Legislation", 28 pages long. I think, of course, that it is too good to be kept in a drawer and only shared with a select few. So if any member would like a copy, it is available by email (only). Send your requests to dcousins@iimetro.com.au and I will send you the PDF.

Des Cousins

NOTICE OF GENERAL MEETING

A General Meeting of the Association will be held at
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 11th NOVEMBER 2016

at 10am

BUSINESS

President's Report
Treasurer's Report
Legislation and Advocacy Report
Membership Report
General Business
Members' Issues

Guest Speaker

Jeff Wynell-Mayow
Financial Information Services Co-Ordinator
Department of Human Services

New Pension Assets Test

Farewell

From Des Cousins

After 5 very interesting years, I am laying down my public WARVRA responsibilities and have resigned from the Committee with effect from 31 December 2016.

All my time on the Committee, either as President, Secretary or Convener of the Legislation and Advocacy Committee, has been dominated by the legislation. It is not over yet!! We still have the promised second Amendment Act to come and work has begun on some of the issues it will deal with. I am willing to help with some of the behind the scenes work but I cannot continue to help villages and individual residents any longer.

The next round of legislation changes will deal with some issues very dear to village residents. Perhaps the chief of these will be reserve funds and all the issues relating to capital maintenance and upgrading of villages – what does it involve and how is it paid for?

With all the very best wishes for WARVRA! Des Cousins

Western Australian Retirement Villages Residents Association Inc

ABN 31 565 412 127

warvra.org.au warvra@gmail.com 0448 812 888

WARVRA Committee Directory 2016-17

Name	Role(s)	Phone	Mob	Email	Correspondence
Colin Edwards	President & Advocacy	08 9535 6005	0427 247 514	talworth40@gmail.com	11/10 Hungerford Avenue, Halls Head 6210
Verelle Ward	Vice-President & Legislation	08 9204 3402	0447 128 891	jonver2@bigpond.com	
Val Brown	Secretary	08 9557 1845	0419 910 724	gg.vb@bigpond.com	145/38 Norwood Avenue, Baldivis 6171
Bob Hamilton	Treasurer	08 9535 2240	0427 199 711	hamish53@bigpond.com	53/22 Carnegie Place, Greenfields 6210
Des Cousins	Legislation/Advocacy (C)	08 9407 7849	0417 314 735	dcousins@iimetro.com.au	
Julia Lynch	Membership & Education	08 9557 5139	0401 284 555	julialynch@westnet.com.au	
Ian Nordeck	Membership & Education(C)	08 9534 7650	-	ianandreae@internode.on.net	
Arthur Mccarthy	Legislation/Advocacy	08 9447 4077	-	(tba)	

Regional Committees' Directory

NAME	POSITION	PHONE	MOBILE	EMAIL	REGION
Monika Cull	Convenor	08 9843 3786	-	monikacull@gmail.com	GREAT SOUTHERN
Ron Sparks	Co-Convenor	08 9754 2614	0427 002 614	norskrap@bigpond.com	SOUTH WEST
Dianne Wilson	Co-Convenor	08 9724 4889	-	didiroy@hotmail.com	SOUTH WEST
Ian Nordeck	Convenor	08 9534 7650		ianandreae@internode.on.net	PEEL
Patricia Nelson	Convenor	-	0417 948 092	patnels2@gmail.com	MID WEST

Presidents Report

A warm "Hello" to all our members and a special welcome to those who have joined us recently and may not have seen our newsletter.

It has been a very challenging year to date. Unfortunately the Committee is somewhat depleted suggesting that we have to evaluate our organisation's structural needs to address your expectations for now and the future.

Our focus now is to source and develop relevant subgroups rather than enlarged formal committee members who can assist our organisation's operations and increased demands.

To this end, we have been fortunate to have a number of interested members who have stepped up to the plate following our calls for help and participated in an information and training program conducted by our Legislation and Membership training convenors. We hope these participants will be able to commit to and help in our services to our members.

On a positive note from my perspective, other committee members and I have had valuable opportunities this year to participate in meetings, forums and conferences both in WA and at a National level with the Property Council (representatives of village owners), manager groups and the public focussing on who we are, and what we do as an organisation in representing you as our members.

Certainly we have got the message out to most that we as Village residents have expectations and needs that we were assured of at the sales desk when parting with our hard earned savings. Those expectations are supported by agreements and the Retirement Villages Act and Regulations.

Verelle Ward and I will shortly be attending a meeting requested and hosted by the WA Property Council and ACSWA (Aged and Community Services WA) to discuss their platform of canvassing State political parties in the forthcoming 2017 State Elections.

We certainly appreciate the opportunity to be party to this debate.

Des and I, with Vice president Verelle Ward, have met with senior representatives of the Dept of Commerce with the object of resolving the issues between many of our members and a group of village owners. For all parties sake we collectively hope this conciliation process is successful.

WESTERN POWER Multi-Residential SOLAR initiative.

As indicated by the Solargain representatives, there will be a meeting of the stakeholders (including WARVRA) on Friday November 4th

Hopefully, some if not all the regulation problems that have stalled some village installations will at last be resolved.

I would suggest, those involved contact their potential installers after this date to clarify their own situations.

Finally I hope to see many of you at our next General Meeting on the very special date of November 11th especially given the speaker and subject we have organised for you.

*My regards to you all
Colin Edwards, PRESIDENT*

WARVRA Newsletter

LAST ISSUE FOR 2016

Next Issue 27 JANUARY 2017

*All contributions should be received by
FRIDAY 20TH JANUARY 2017*

Contact Secretary Val Brown for more information

(See Directory at top of this page)

Membership Matters

Membership Details:

A full audit of the membership list was conducted and identified 14 villages that had not renewed membership, therefore our effective membership base was:

97 villages, 14,052 members

The delinquent villages were contacted; some rejoined and negotiations are continuing with others. We have also had some new villages join with the result that our membership now stands as:

103 villages, 14,202 members

In the last two years, we have doubled our membership, but there is still a long way to go given there are 220 villages containing 23,000 residents in Western Australia.

Volunteer Development and Training:

Twelve potential recruits commenced the Training Course being conducted by Des Cousins and myself over three meetings finishing on October 18.

The interest and enthusiasm has been noticeable and we are confident the outcome will be positive which will allow the interested members to join sub-committees to further development Legislation and Advocacy and Membership/Education.

Regional Meetings:

Six Regional Meetings have been arranged during October/November at which guest speakers from the Department of Human Services will present the New Pension Assets Test, effective 01/01/2017.

We are heavily promoting this amongst all villages in the Regions and the Department and its officers have been most co-operative. The meetings will be held in Albany, Busselton, Bunbury, Peel, Geraldton and the Piney Lakes General Meeting. Peel and Albany meetings have already been held with good reviews and attendance.

WARVRA Communications:

Members may now become subscribers to the WARVRA web page and as a subscriber, will be advised and provided with a Link to read the latest information and updates.

To become a subscriber, you need to:

- * Visit the WARVRA website, ie warvra.org.au
- * The front page mentions the new Newsletter Subscription Form
- * The Form is also on the Contact menu – top right of Home page
- * Once completed and submitted, it requires confirmation (an email is sent and the subscriber is required to 'click' that Link to confirm it is really them subscribing).
- * The form contains fields for the Village and Postcode to allow WARVRA to target specific areas for upcoming notifications.

Please promote the benefits of this new Service within your village.

Remember – **'Membership Matters'**

Ian Nordeck
Membership Convenor

Out and About

On the weekend of October 29th & 30th WARVRA will be taking part in the Expo **"Life begins at 50"** which is being held at the Claremont Showgrounds. Our booth will be easy to identify as our banner will be on display. Please come along, not only to meet some of your committee, but there are many interesting exhibits which you may enjoy viewing.

November 9th is **Have a Go Day** again and this year the organisers have arranged exhibits differently and have also included many more for your enjoyment. WARVRA will have a booth this year, site "128" is our number and we are opposite Coffee Express. So again please come along, see us and also have a very interesting day.

I must say I get a lot of enjoyment from meeting the many people who seek us out when we hold our booths at the various seniors' events. If you also like talking to people about our style of living you may like to consider offering us a helping hand in 2017. WARVRA is planning to attend several seniors' events next year and we would welcome your participation.

If you are interested please call Julia on 0447 128 891 or send an email to warvra@gmail.com

Julia Lynch
Membership and Education

Australian Retirement Village Residents Association/Retirement Living Council

Joint Statement of Intent - 26 October 2016

Retirement village living is an option being taken up by more senior Australians than ever before. Nearly 200,000 people call a retirement village home around the country. We know from formal research as well as from personal stories that most of these people enjoy the support and lifestyle of village living, although there are inevitably areas of concern and dispute.

With the huge increase in the number of Australians who are over 65, we are all aware of the increasingly important role that retirement villages play in giving more senior Australians choice. Choice - of community; home (an apartment, townhouse or villa); and service, from basic communal activities to tailored home care.

In addition to the growing diversity in location, home and service type, many new villages are needed as well as the redevelopment of some old villages that no longer meet some resident's needs. But along with the increased demand for modern villages comes a great responsibility on the part of retirement village owners to ensure the rights of residents and families are fully addressed

Both residents and operators have a big stake in ensuring retirement villages are vibrant communities and attractive places to live. It is with this common ground in mind that the peak bodies for village residents (all of the state and territory associations, which together form the Australian Retirement Village Residents Association, or ARVRA) and national village operators (the Retirement Living Council, or RLC) have begun meeting regularly to discuss initiatives of common benefit as well as issues that can be resolved together.

For example:

- A survey for residents has been distributed asking for feedback on the most effective methods a retirement village

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MEETING BETWEEN RLC AND RETIREMENT VILLAGE RESIDENTS ASSOCIATIONS (25 July 2016)

Introduction

The Retirement Living Council (RLC) was pleased to host a meeting between its members and representatives of all the state and territory Retirement Village Residents Associations.

The aim of the meeting was for operator and resident's representatives to listen to each other's challenges and concerns, and to explore the possibility of joint efforts to tackle agreed priorities.

Attendees

RVRA executive

Alistair Christie (ACT); Dorothy Swanton & Annette McAndrew (NSW); Judy Mayfield (Qld); Gill Kennard (SA); Lesley Menzies & Lawrie Robertson (Vic); Colin Edwards (WA)

RLC members present

Alison Quinn (RetireAustralia), Andrew Philip (Retirement Communities Australia), Michael Eggington (LendLease), Stig Anderson (IRT), John Leo (Mbark), Robin Levison (Eureka Group), Derek McMillan (Australian Unity)

Themes and actions

1. Good will and working together

It was agreed that there was a lot of benefit and gains to be made from the RLC and RVRAs:

- Improving understanding of each other's experience and views;
- Swapping information and concerns in order to try and solve problems; and
- Identifying a work plan to address issues in the industry, where consensus can be reached.

Action 1: Mary Wood to draft a letter, to be co-signed by her and ARVRA President, describing common goals and a commitment

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accreditation scheme could positively impact village life;

- Resident representatives have been involved in the delivery of a section of the Property Council's Village Management Industry Diploma, speaking on behalf of residents about their expectations of management;
- The RLC commissioned research from Alzheimer's Australia NSW to provide village operators with high quality guidance on how best to manage the complex issues associated with the incidence of dementia in villages. Residents and their families were included in the research through discussion groups, individual interviews and the assessment process.
- We are currently examining ways of making village dispute resolution simpler and more consistent, and also ways of saving residents money through reduced council rates.
- The ARVRA and RLC are united in their goal to see thriving, happy retirement communities across the country. Both residents and operators are best served by a co-operative approach to tackling challenges in the retirement village sector, and by discussing any difference of views constructively. There will always be matters where the ARVRA and RLC agree to disagree! But we are committed to working together where possible.

Kind regards

*Alistair Christie, President,
Australian Retirement Village Residents Association; and
Mary Wood, Executive Director, Retirement Living Council*

to work together where possible for the good of residents and growth of the industry (for circulation to RVRAs and the RLC).

2. Dispute resolution

It was agreed to investigate alternative dispute resolution channels for disputes where escalation beyond a village manager is necessary, in order to resolve them quickly and cheaply and avoid the need for the judiciary.

Action 2: Mary Wood to distribute a contact list and protocol of dispute resolution procedures (RLC operators) to RVRA executive.

Action 3: RVRA and RLC to consider various mechanisms for industry dispute resolution (e.g. formalized protocol for involving regional managers; 'wise heads' or external counsel model; hotline) for consideration by the groups at a subsequent meeting.

3. Rates (land and services)

The unfairness of residents paying for the same service through general service fees and council rates, and potentially missing out on pensioner rebates too, was discussed.

Action 4: RLC staff to research technical arguments (eg valuation methodology) and consider optimal political channels for reform (e.g. State Minister vs local councils) as well as campaign tools (eg targeted postcards).

4. Transparency of budgets

The desire for more itemized information in village budgets given to residents (e.g. head office charges), as well as the legitimacy of certain charges, was discussed.

Action 5: RVRA to provide examples of good and bad practice to RLC, and work with RLC to devise best practice transparency standards that don't incur extra accounting costs.

Action 6: Andrew Philips to share a pro forma document used by RCA that details resident's rights and responsibilities in respect of repairs and maintenance, in the context of transparency and sharing information.

5. Code of conduct/industry pride

The NZ Code of Conduct was discussed in the context of a drive to increase pride in and standards of customer service across the industry.

Action 7: It was agreed that RLC operators should set the standard for staff behavior, and investigate whether the NZ Code of Conduct is a useful industry tool to adopt.

Action 8: RLC team to ensure Property Council Academy invites RVRA executive to present to students at village manager industry diploma where practical.

6. Integrity of independent living/evolution of RVs

Residents reported an increase in other residents with disabilities, dementia and formal care responsibilities (including for grandchildren) and the changes this is bringing to retirement villages. The rise in periodic rental tenants was also noted.

Action 9: RLC to organize a briefing for RVRA executive on trends in the industry, particularly care and tenancy trends.

7. Redevelopment challenges

The need to redevelop villages that has old stock which is unattractive or unsuitable for the next generation of residents, and the difficulties in achieving consensus for work to proceed in a village, was discussed.

Action 10: RVRA to discuss a leadership position on this challenge.

Here's some good advice

REFURBISHMENT

Most residence contracts will provide for some measure of refurbishment of residential premises once they have been permanently vacated. The amount of work to be done (and the cost) can vary greatly, largely influenced by the length of occupancy, the age of the residential premises and the demands of the market for attractive and appealing properties.

There have been some changes to the requirements and procedures in the 2015 Code. Keep a copy of these and pass them on to your family.

What does the Code require (our emphases)

22. Refurbishment of residential premises

(1) In this clause —

refurbishment work means maintenance, repair, replacement or renovation work carried out in respect of residential premises to return the residential premises to a reasonable condition.

(2) If a resident permanently vacates his or her residential premises and is required under the residence contract to pay for, or contribute to, the cost of refurbishment work to those residential premises, the administering body of a retirement village must —

(a) before the commencement of the refurbishment work, give the former resident or the former resident's personal representative —

(i) a written statement that lists and gives details of each item of refurbishment work that the administering body believes is required to be carried out on the residential premises; and

(ii) if the administering body is arranging for the refurbishment work to be carried out on the residential premises, a written estimate of the cost for each item of work and an indication of the commencement and completion dates of the work including anything that may foreseeably affect those dates; and

(iii) if there is a material change to a statement given under subparagraph (i), or an estimate given under subparagraph (ii), a written notice of that change;

and

(b) before accepting or making any demand for payment for the refurbishment work —

(i) ensure the work is completed; and

(ii) give the former resident, or the former resident's personal representative, a fully itemised account for the final cost of the work; and

(iii) provide the former resident, or the former resident's personal representative, with a reasonable opportunity to enter the residential premises in order to inspect the refurbishment work.

(3) The former resident, or the former resident's personal representative, may apply to the State Administrative Tribunal for an order in relation to any refurbishment work that has been, or is proposed to be, carried out on that resident's residential premises, if the person is of the opinion that —

(a) the work was not, when the residential premises were permanently vacated by the former resident, reasonably required to return the residential premises to a condition required by the residence contract; or

(b) the proposed or actual cost of the work is excessive or unreasonable; or

(c) the proportion of the total costs that are to be paid by the former resident, or the former resident's personal representative, is excessive or unreasonable; or

(d) the statement given under subclause (2)(a)(i) describes an amount of work that exceeds the amount of work required to return the residential premises to a reasonable condition; or

(e) the commencement or completion date of the work indicated by the administering body in subclause (2)(a)(ii) is unreasonable; or

(f) the actual time taken to complete the work to the residential premises was unreasonable.

(4) On an application under subclause \ (3) the State Administrative Tribunal may, in addition to any other decision it has the power to make, make an order —

(a) if work is being carried out on the residential premises, that the work be stopped or that it be completed; or

(b) if work has not been carried out on the residential premises, that the work be commenced; or

(c) that varies the amount that the former resident, or the former resident's personal representative, is required to pay for work carried out, or proposed to be carried out, on the residential premises.

Again, can we request you to make sure your family has this information so that they understand the process when you are not there to guide them.

Des Cousins