

This submission is in relation to the way retirement villages administered by volunteer boards/groups are run and the lack of accountability to both the government and the residents.

I believe these volunteer boards/groups should be subject to the same accountability requirements as villages run on a commercial basis.

In making this submission I must advise you I was secretary then president and later a resident of the village concerned and have since left the village.

It is run by 10 volunteers elected from the local community, however there has been little change in board membership over the past 10 years or so which has resulted in a 'closed shop' mentality, nepotism, intimidation and bullying.

When rumours began to circulate the long serving gardener (over 15 years), whom residents knew and trusted, maybe replaced, many longer term residents, some of whom I had assisted when relocating from their life long homes to the village, sought my help.

I wrote to the board seeking information and clarification of the rumours and canvassed the strength of support for the gardener.

It would seem the board, or at least the then chairperson, objected to residents questioning the board's actions. The chairperson, within hours of mine being delivered) circulated a letter of his own without any consultation with the board. The letter condemned my actions, said it was not true and questioned my right to send it.

Retained for another year, the gardener was treated to what could only be described as a year of stalking and bullying, was removed from the gardening committee and ostracised by the board.

I also felt ostracised by them, and some residents, because I had dared speak out on behalf of the residents. I have since left the village.

The board did organise a mediation consultation through the Office for the Ageing, between me and the then chairperson, it concluded without any solution. I advised the board I did not want this person to enter my unit for any reason whatsoever.

The board often has costly work done without consulting residents. They fail to research proposed work or seek more than one price for the work. They also never seek government grants.

One board member is employed to do the maintenance work and often refurbishes vacant units prior to subletting. Other board members are also paid to do work in the village. A conflict of interest or at the very least a perceived conflict of interest. They fail to run resident meetings correctly, allowing some of the more vocal, stronger residents (often friends of board members) to frighten the Older more vulnerable residents

They tell them they shouldn't complain as the board could walk out, a manager employed and fees would skyrocket. The board never bring these people into line neither do they attempt to dispel the comments.

I therefore submit that **ALL** villages, commercially run or otherwise, should be made accountable to a government authority and residents should have access to a complaints tribunal without fear of retribution and intimidation such as is occurring in this village at present.

Mrs Pat Noyce  
Kingscote Qld 5223  
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I would like to advise the Commission I have written this submission with the welfare of residents of Berri Cottage Homes Inc. Berri 5343 in mind.

I was involved with the village in one way or another for over 30 years. Saw it expand till where it is now a multi million dollar concern. Very good, capable and concerned people administered it until perhaps the last 10 years. As the board changed it became more and more isolated from residents. In fact residents often said we don't know the board, we never see them I was instrumental in setting up a Residents committee as per the Retirement Village Act. It worked well for quite sometime particularly whilst the village had a very good secretary who not only updated the office system and contracts organised tradespeople and liaised with the residents.. Again this seemed to anger the then chairperson resulting in his sudden departure. Another was employed, she also left abruptly.

Many times I tried to discuss the problems with the board on behalf of residents. But I was ignored. The residents committee lapsed, it was set up again but only for a short time.

Village residents do not have a voice although the board has taken on my suggestion to hold more frequent informal residents meetings. The current board gives one the impression they know best and do things without any discussion with residents They treat them as if they are old and incapable, keeping them in the dark about the running of the village which after all is their home.

Yours sincerely  
Pat Noyce.