

RVResidents Update | MARCH 2024

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Update from the President...

Hi everyone. What a whirlwind couple of weeks, and there will be more to come, believe me.

I've spent the past week presenting at Forums in the Wairarapa, Kapiti Coast and Porirua plus a very enlightening meeting at the Beehive with Minister Andrew Bayly, who is the Minister for Commerce and Consumer Affairs.

Firstly, the responses from the Villages. It is obvious that residents across NZ, and especially the rural regions, are fully aware of the need for changes to the Act. Compared to 12-18 months ago, residents are fully aware of RVResidents stances on the requirements for change. Resounding success in the Wairarapa where some 30 new members have signed up. Kapiti Coast and Porirua Forums were also well attended. The feedback received was extremely positive with a definite request to keep on the case with the review.

Margaret Hobbs, our volunteer Policy Advisor, Gerald Rawson - Wellington/Wairarapa Region Chairperson and myself had an very timely appointment with Minister Bayly. The meeting was held in the Beehive Caucus Room (perhaps that's a message to the industry?) We had our points ready for discussion, but that was thrown out the window because Minister Bayly wanted to get to the "nitty gritty" and the facts. With his portfolio he knows exactly why the review of the Act is needed. He gave us some serious thoughts about ways to move forward which we will bring back to our National Exec for development. Extremely encouraging and a very worthwhile meeting.



Then, to top it all off Katie Bradford from TV One phoned me to arrange an interview and then production crew showed up within 2 minutes at Parliament Grounds for an interview. Extremely timely with the findings from the Commerce Commission, which was well covered in Thursday's media coverage. Great to see the residents voice headline ONE

News on Thursday 29/2/24.

Thursdays Media coverage over ComCom findings ...

Media was abuzz with news on the release of the Commerce Commissions findings into possible misleading advertising and ORA terms that they say create "significant imbalance". Articles popped up on virtually all online media outlets, along with radio interviews on NewsTalk ZB and ONE TV News.

We sent out a Special Update on Thursday explaining the findings and sharing some of the links. The Press then published an in depth article on Friday.

Next Steps: We look forward to receiving a progress report from residents, operators and the Commission in addressing some of these items that are considered to cause 'significant imbalance'.

RVResidents meeting with the Minister for Seniors

We had a very productive meeting with Minister Costello late January at her parliament office. The minister has a passion for seeing seniors access affordable accommodation and a desire to make that task easier. We explained that while many residents are 'happy', the failing consumer protection and imbalance for vulnerable residents required attention and thus the need for the review to continue.

RVResidents & RVA discussions...

Following on from further announcements by the RVA that we won't meet with them, our CE phoned the RVA's Executive Director on Monday.

He wanted to challenge the statements being made and reiterate again the invitation for the two groups Presidents and CE's to have a full and frank discussion. The response was that the RVA do not wish to meet on these terms. With the public announcement on TV that the operators association has "reached out to the Residents Association" we continue to wait for that invitation to arrive.

An open letter from RVResidents was sent to operators earlier this week.

Latest Magazine Out!

If you're a resident in a retirement village AND a full paid up member, then either you've received your copy of RVResidents latest members magazine or it's 'in transit'. Outstanding copies were being couriered off on Friday 1st March.

For our Associate Members and Supporters you can order a copy of the full magazine on our website via <https://www.rvrnz.org.nz/order-extra-magazines/>.

Direct Debit Forms

For most you that either have an email address, a credit card or pay by internet banking - paying your annual membership is not a problem. For those that do not have access to any of these it becomes harder to renew. We have a direct debit form which can be completed by you and posted back to us, and then we'll look after your renewals each year.

Contact your local VC or talk to one of our team if you would like to get this set up.

Looking for a volunteer Secretary or Notetaker.

RVR residents would like assistance of a volunteer to help with minutes from meetings. If you are proficient at taking notes, putting them into a Word doc. and using email then we would love to hear from you. Some experience with Teams or Zoom online meetings would be an advantage, but not essential. Please email Jan - secretary@rvr.org.nz

Thank you!

2024 is THE critical year...

This year is likely to be THE year that determines what improvements we see in the legislation. The review will continue and it will be strongly debated this year because it's about fairness and consumer protection, and that's going to need some operators to relinquish a few old unfair habits.

Your membership fee is what allows your association to do most of the work that gets the attention of the public, Ministry of Housing and Urban Development (MHUD) and Ministers that will eventually lead to better outcomes for residents and improved terms in our Occupation Rights Agreements.

We know that this year we must budget for:

- Independent legislative advice, legal representation and forensic accountancy to further support how the village model can afford the changes requested
- Increased print communications to ensure residents get a balanced picture
- Further political engagement at Parliament House
- National forums and meetings

Your Executive has looked at many ways to minimise this cost. This includes:

- Increasing sponsorship revenue by over 100% for 2024
- Seeking further advertising to fund a 200% increase in print costs
- Reducing travel costs by having Regional Leaders running local meetings
- Seeking government or trust funding to assist with operations

However, even with these other funding sources, we are looking at a \$50,000+ deficit unless a slight increase to fees is implemented. A \$5 increase per person will see us with a small surplus, which we believe should carry us through the next while. We understand things are tight for some which is why we've left the online Associate Membership at \$25 and the 5 and 10 year Full Memberships virtually the same. If you would like to switch to one of these the details are at the bottom of this email.

It's going to be an important year, and we hope you will continue to be a part of it.

2024 MEMBERSHIP / SUBSCRIPTION PRICING:

>> Annual Single \$35.

>> Annual Couple \$50.

(Note: There is a \$10 Joining fee per person for each NEW MEMBERSHIP)

5 year and 10 year memberships are also available at the old rate;

>> **Platinum 5 Year Single \$150 OR 10 Year Single \$295**

>> **Platinum 5 Year Couple \$195 OR 10 Year Couple \$395**

Platinum Memberships help us, and also allows you to **lock in the last years annual rate** (for a limited time) for 5 or 10 years. **All with ONE simple payment.**

NOTE: Next Silver & Platinum Cards are planned to be mailed out mid 2024.

If you do not have a credit card or access to internet banking and would like to make renewing easier by **direct debit** then download our **[DIRECT DEBIT FORM from HERE](#)**. Otherwise, your village contact may be able to help, or you can post your renewal into us :

RVRResidents, C/- Private Bag 4707 Christchurch 8014.

Make sure to include your name and village.

REMEMBER - Your membership is **VITAL** for improving village legislation and giving residents a voice and peace of mind. Thanks for being part of a nationwide organisation making a difference for retirement village residents.

If you wish to upgrade your membership from annual to Platinum (5 or 10 years) - then simply email **registrar@rvr.org.nz**

Associate Membership: Have you invited prospective residents and family?

For the annual cost of \$25, family and friends OR prospective residents can now join RVResidents as an Associate member.

Simply visit <https://www.rvrnz.org.nz/memberships/associate-membership-options/>

Send this to your family or shout them their first years membership.

They will then receive emails, like this one, letting them know what is happening to the sector... as they will most likely be the ones having to sort it out at the end.

Any questions, simply email admin@rvr.org.nz

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You can read some of our past printed newsletters online via <https://www.rvrnz.org.nz/resources/> and if there is something you would like to know more about, then please contact us on 0800 787 699 or email either admin@rvr.org.nz or ce@rvr.org.nz

Regards, Nigel Matthews (Chief Executive).
