



Housing for the Aged Action Group

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Residents Gather to Call for Reform

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On the 1st May, a group of 140 residents of retirement villages, residential villages, caravan parks and independent living units came together at a Retirement Housing Forum at Victoria University to ensure the recommendations from the recently released Parliamentary Inquiry are acted upon urgently to address serious concerns.

The forum was supported by Housing for the Aged Action Group, Consumer Action Law Centre, Residents of Retirement Villages Victoria and Council on the Ageing as part of an ongoing collaboration on issues facing residents of retirement housing.

Fiona York, co-manager from Housing for the Aged Action Group, said “The forum was a great opportunity for people to work together on a strategy to ensure that the Inquiry recommendations are adopted by Parliament”. Parliament has six months to respond to the Inquiry recommendations, which were released last month.

The group were addressed by experts in the field, Katherine Temple from Consumer Action Law Centre, Rhonda Held from Council on the Ageing, Lawrie Robertson from Residents of Retirement Villages Victoria and Fiona York from Housing for the Aged Action Group.

After much discussion, the residents group identified the top five areas for urgent action. These are:

- An alternative dispute resolution process, such as a Retirement Housing Ombudsman
- Appropriate training for managers of retirement housing
- A process of accreditation for that all retirement housing providers
- A review of the *Retirement Villages Act 1986*
- Clarification of deferred management fees and clearer contracts

Fiona York (HAAG) noted, “We know from our years of action that we are more powerful when we work together, and it was great to see so many people attend to express their concerns, prioritise them and plan for the best way to influence change to improve the lives of residents of retirement housing”.

The group hopes that the Government will act swiftly to make the reforms necessary to make living in retirement housing a safe and secure option for all older Victorians.

For more information contact HAAG, 9654 7389