
 AN OPEN LETTER TO THE NEW ZEALAND PUBLIC

Older New Zealanders are voting with their feet. So why do people think we've lost our heads?

Over 50,000 New Zealanders live in a retirement village, with an average of 100 new residents joining every week.

We make this choice for many reasons - attractive unit prices, the subsidised cost of village living compared to home ownership, and the enjoyment and security of close, well-designed and safe communities.

But if you believe some people, all of us (and all of our lawyers) are completely stupid!

We're writing this letter on behalf of nearly 90%* of retirement village residents who are either very satisfied or satisfied with their experiences of living in a retirement village. We are happy with our fully-informed choice - and reject ill-informed commentary that risks undermining the way of life that we have chosen, and that we love.

We come from all walks of life. We are educated and informed. And we're capable of making our own decisions about how, and where, we spend our golden years.

We can choose to trade capital gains for financial certainty, provision of ongoing maintenance, and peace of mind. And we can choose to pay management fees in return for the facilities that enrich our lives, and the deeply-appreciated support of village staff.

We can also choose to sign contracts, with open eyes - and with mandatory legal advice ensuring we fully and explicitly understand the terms we are agreeing to, and the long-term financial decisions we are making.

So if you want to know about retirement villages, talk to all of us who live in them because we love our way of life, and we want to ensure it remains a viable choice for us, and for other older New Zealanders who may become our friendly neighbours in the future.

Come and visit ... and see why we made our choice.

We think you will agree we got it right.

*Signed by the following Residents Committee (RC) Representatives,
on behalf of New Zealand's 410 retirement village communities:*

Cheryl Keats-Smith,
RC Chair, 7 St Vincent, Auckland

John Harrison,
RC Chair, Acacia Cove, Auckland

Billa Field,
RC Chair, Alpine View, Christchurch

Pat Cronin,
RC Chair, Ascot, Invercargill

Pauline Hope,
RC Chair, Aspiring Lifestyle, Wanaka

Patricia Stacks,
RC Chair, Awatere, Hamilton

Jenny Arnold,
RC Chair, Bayswater Village, Mt Maunganui

Paul Woodman,
RC Chair, Bupa Ballarat, Rangiora

Bill Graydon,
RC President, Bupa Cashmere View, Chch

Sidney Barker,
RC Chair, Bupa Remuera, Auckland

Alan Johnson,
RC Chair, Bupa Riverstone, Palmerston Nth

Jude Allen,
RC Secretary, Beetham Village, Gisborne

Ross Haycock,
RC Chair, Cedar Manor, Tauranga

William O'Brien, MNZM,
RA President, Chatsford Lifestyle, Mosgiel

Heather Kinsley,
RC Chair, Coastal Villas, Paraparaumu

Peter Graham,
RC Chair, Dannemora Gardens, Auckland

Toby Hempleman,
RC Treasurer, Fergusson, Upper Hutt

Babs Miller,
RC Chair, Forest Lake Gardens, Hamilton

John Thorpe,
RC Chair, Golden View Lifestyle, Cromwell

Shirley Baylis,
RC Chair, Gracelands, Hastings

Denise Whitehead,
RC Chair, Greenwood Park, Tauranga

Barry Knight,
RSG Chair, Greytown Orchards, Greytown

Lyn Owst,
RC Chair, Hibiscus Coast Village, Orewa

Janion le Quesne,
RC Chair, Highfield Country Estate,
Te Awamutu

Corinne Pritchard,
RC Chair, Hillsborough Heights, Auckland

Murray Heath,
RC Chair, Lady Wigram, Christchurch

Linda Tucker,
RC Deputy Chair, Lady Wigram, Christchurch

Mary Corbett,
RC Secretary, Lady Wigram, Christchurch

Daphne Cosford,
RC Chair, Longford Park, Auckland

Paddy Benstead,
RC Chair, Mayfair, North Shore

Lleon Downes,
RC Chair, Maygrove, Orewa

Tony Brown,
RC Chair, Metlife Orchards, Christchurch

Pamela Ross,
RC Chair, Molly Ryan, New Plymouth

Stella Cattle,
RC Deputy Chair, Acacia Cove, Auckland

Mary Johnston,
RC Chair, Kelvin Grove, Palmerston Nth

Diane Ammundsen,
RC Chair, Kapiti Retirement Trust,
Paraparaumu

Rodney Warrender,
RC Chair, Ocean Shores, Mt Maunganui

Tony O'Connor,
RC Chair, Olive Tree Village, Palmerston Nth

Mary Campbell,
RC Chair, Parkside, Auckland

Jim Wallace,
RC Chair, Parkwood, Waikanae

John Emanuel,
RC Chair, Queenstown Country Club

Neville Corbett,
RC Chair, Real Living Epsom, Auckland

Irene Eagle,
RC Chair, Redwood, Blenheim

Paul Forder,
RC Chair, Remuera Rise, Auckland

Terrence Exeter,
RC Chair, Riversdale Lifestyle, Napier

Russell Warren,
RC Chair, Selwyn Village, Auckland

Beverley White,
RC Deputy Chair, Selwyn Village, Auckland

Jennette Andrews,
RC Chair, Somervale, Mt Maunganui

Jill Smith,
Social Chair, Speldhurst Country Estate, Levin

Allan Butland,
RC Chair, Springlands Lifestyle, Blenheim

Graeme Kelly,
RC Chair, St Andrews, Auckland

Susan Baldock,
RC Secretary, St Andrews, Auckland

Brian Wood,
RC Chair, Stonehaven, Whangarei

Garry Smith,
RC Chair, Tamahere Country Club, Tamahere

John Steel,
RC Chair, Te Awa Lifecare, Cambridge

Noeleen Guillard,
RC Chair, The Bayview, Tauranga

Gary Fleet,
RC Chair, The Grove Lifestyle, Orewa

L H Boulton,
RC Chair, The Poynton, Takapuna

Brian Horne,
RC Chair, Waiheke RV, Waiheke Island

Michael Gates,
RC Chair, Wairarapa Village, Masterton

* UMR Insight Survey.