

MHOA (VIC) INC

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Manufactured Home Owners Association
(Vic) Inc

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NEWSLETTER

JUNE 2023

To all our members, the MHOA (Vic) AGM is coming up in September and we are inviting everyone to participate and present your ideas, our planned agenda for 2023-2024 will be issued in August. We would appreciate your comments on the direction the MHOA is heading. (see AGM Reminder on Page 3)

MHOA is now being recognized by our Members of Parliament as shown below:

The Hon Matt Fregon - 17.06.2023 via Lisa Williams, assistant

What are some of the additional protections or changes residents are asking to be included or strengthened, or that have been raised with the advisory group?

Matt would of course be happy to meet to discuss this issue further. I will await some further background from the group and we can then lock in a meeting time that best suits.

Warm regards, Lisa

The Hon Nathan Lambert -16.06.2023

Thanks, Judy. We have looked into this and appreciate the points you make, particularly regarding regulatory clarity.

The Hon Bev McArthur -16.06.2023

Trish McClure, Bev's assistant, rang and we spoke for around an hour about the issues in legislation and the lack of trust residents have of owner/operators and how this can be improved through legislation changes, taking into account other states' legislation.

On the 16.06.2023 - 125 emails were sent to all Victorian MPs by MHOA.

The MPs second meeting coordinated by Sarah Connolly; Nathan Lambert is also still to be held with The Hon Danny Pearson, MP for Consumer Affairs Victoria in June some time, to discuss what can be done for manufactured home villages.

Residential Tenancies Commissioner, Heather Holst—Meetings with MHV Residents

1. Roundtable conference 70 residents on 24.08.2022
2. Kingsgate Village, Kilmore— 90 residents on 18.03.2023
3. Palm Lake Resort, Phillip Island - 65 Residents' 05.06.2023

So far, a **total of 225** residents have been able to voice their concerns

Numbers Count

The power in numbers cannot be overemphasized. There are significant numbers of manufactured home owners and supporters in Victoria. Together, we can make a difference.

One Voice

MHOA (Vic) speaks with one voice. Why feel powerless and alone, together is better! We take your message to our representatives and government legislators.

Residential Advisory Group /Residential Stakeholders Group

Meetings with government departments/representatives, allows the MHOA an opportunity to discuss amendments to legislation and to inform them of additional legislative and ethical considerations for protecting vulnerable people.

Vulnerable people can include us seniors and the concerns that affect residents everyday living in these villages/parks

Our President has represented the MHVs on the Residential Tenancies Commissioner Advisory Group for four years and has been offered another two years, with an invitation to join the Residential Stakeholders Reference Group, Judy has accepted both.

See letter below:

Dear Judy, Invitation to join the Stakeholder Reference Group I would like to formally invite you (or a suitably qualified delegate) to join the Commissioner for Residential Tenancies' Stakeholder Reference Group.

Residential Tenancies Commissioner, Heather Holst, met with 65 residents at Palm Lakes Village , Phillip Island, 05.06.23

Most villages have similar issues. As the meeting document is large, we have only provided some comments from the transcript of the meeting.

Resident: *An **ombudsman** that understands this legislation and somewhere people know they can go for assistance and dispute resolution. At the moment, even legal people tell us they don't understand and don't know anything about this legislation. VCAT is a dead loss, actually. In Victoria you can't take a group issue to VCAT – you can in other States – you must take it to VCAT on an individual basis and that is terrifying for elderly people for two reasons: (a) money-wise (b) we don't have legal representation. For example: PLR come down from Qld to VCAT with their legal people who are on their staff. What is the resident meant to do? They are there by themselves with no legal representation and may end up with costs they can't afford. We need an ombudsman.*

Resident: *Regarding **the rent increase** we recently had a dispute over the rent increase which they offered to some but not to others. We had a judgement where we had a win. Details of this will be made available at a later date.*

Resident: *Regarding **DMF**. If a house is worth \$500,000 and another is worth \$200,000 why should one pay more DMF? This is discriminatory.*

Resident: *The fact we **don't have sufficient legal representation**. We can't get advocacy even if you jump up and down. They don't understand the RTA and so they don't understand and give the proper advice you should be getting. They say they can do this and that but it turns out they can't. I've been to VCAT and am still trying to get legal representation in Victoria. We need to change things but we all need to stick together and we will get somewhere.*

Resident: *I feel that the language in the **contracts** is not clear.*

Resident: *When it comes to **maintenance complaints**, the first thing you do is go to management, when you get a negative response or a response at all, you then go to Consumer Affairs. Consumer Affairs will then send out somebody to look at it. They will negotiate between management and yourself. If it doesn't come to fruition, they will give you a letter. That letter will allow you to go to VCAT. If you then decide to look at the letter given to you, it will be very softly worded. Consumer Affairs do not want to rock the boat. They try extremely hard not to rock the boat. What you have is a learned helplessness. In other words, you can complain until you stop and you go away. That's how they resolve the problem. They know you can't push it any further. That's how they deal with complaints.*

Resident: *Could I add to that, that because residential parks in Victoria are not registered with a central body, they don't have to register. Therefore, there is no central body overseeing what residential parks are doing. In fact, as I said before, there is no database as to how many there actually are.*

Manufactured Home Owners Association is the only group that are collecting that data at the moment. We know of about 78 villages and collected data on about 40 which required a lot of work by one person pretending to be interested in buying and asking questions. We need standalone legislation and registration and perhaps a Code of Conduct.

Heather: *Just to take up your point about how many residents there are in Victoria, and how quickly the parks are growing, the fact that we don't actually know, that is an issue. No single organisation at this stage is responsible for registering premises or understanding how many residences they have. That's a base-line we need to get to.*

Resident: *I think multiple letters from individuals about the same concerns is better.*

Heather: *If each resident wrote a letter, it would be better to have a stack of them.*

Resident: *May I ask who do you convey our requirements to? Who do you answer to?*

Heather: *This area is very complex, who is responsible for which bit. The primary one and the one who appointed me is the Minister for Consumer Affairs.*

Resident: *Is he listening?*

Heather: *Yes, I believe he is, you know how the process works – he's got to make the whole Cabinet listen (which is why you should have your local MPs briefed).*

Resident: *This is where MHOA is also attempting to make a difference, of which some of you are members and we would like many more because voices we have, the louder we will be heard.*

Membership Renewals are due on 01.07.2023 covering 12 months membership.

A renewal application form is attached..

If anyone in your village (who not already a member) wishes to become a member of MHOA, please email us requesting an information sheet and Homeowner Membership Application Form.

Family & Friends Memberships now available. MHOA membership is available not just for manufactured home owners living in residential parks and villages throughout Victoria. Supporter membership is open to family and friends who have loved ones living in manufactured home parks and villages, who support our cause. Please email us to request an information sheet and Supporter Membership Application Form.

Our AGM will be held on Tuesday, 5 September, 2023 . Members will vote for their 2023-2024 committee members and have an opportunity to put questions to these members. Notices and Nomination Forms will be sent to all members in August.

Attachment: **RENEWAL** Membership Application Form