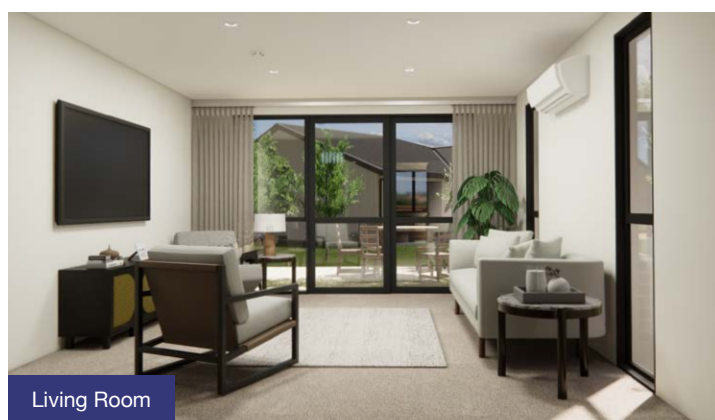


# New village extension at Horowhenua

Work is progressing apace on the new extension to our retirement village in Levin, Horowhenua.

The existing village features 55 villas and 28 rental units. When it's finished the extension will offer 100 modern, thoughtfully designed new homes with state-of-the-art kitchens and bathrooms and a full range of eco-friendly amenities.

The village extension is all part of The Masonic Villages Trust's ongoing strategy of growth and expansion, designed to cater to the rapidly growing number of Kiwis who will be demanding retirement living in coming years.



*\*Please note these images are architectural impressions only.*



## Retirement village residents demand changes

**Some retirement village residents want change to The Retirement Villages Act.**

**They say the law is grossly unfair and they want more consumer protections.**

**But Warick Dunn is urging caution.**

The Retirement Villages Residents Association (RVRA), which represents the nearly 50,000 Kiwis living in a retirement village, says there are insufficient consumer protections under the existing law for residents.

The Retirement Villages Association (RVA), which represents the village operators, begs to differ, saying New Zealand's retirement villages are subject to a world-leading regulatory

framework with considerable oversight, safeguards, transparency and consumer protection for residents.

The two groups are at loggerheads. RVRA Vice President, Di Sinclair, says the current law is grossly unfair, and in no other sector could those providing a service get away with what retirement village operators do.

On the other hand, Executive Director of the RVA, John Collyns, says the RVRA is making inaccurate and misleading claims.

The retirement villages sector is governed by The Retirement Villages Act which hasn't been updated for 20 years. The RVRA claims the Act is no longer fit for purpose and is pushing a 'Unite for Seniors' campaign calling for change.

The claims and counter-claims do need addressing. New Zealand has a rapidly ageing population and more than one in five Kiwis, or approximately 1.2 million people, will be aged over 65 by 2035.

By 2033 more than 80,000 Kiwis will live in a retirement village. It's therefore important the legislation and regulations governing the sector are fair to both operators and residents.

The RVRA says that's not the case now and there is a power imbalance favouring operators.

Masonic Villages Ltd operates 18 retirement villages around the country, providing homes for 820 residents as at June 30 this year, with another 100 retirement villas and units under development.

Through Masonic Villages Ltd, The Masonic Villages Trust is the largest charitable provider of retirement villages accommodation in New Zealand and has an active growth strategy that will see an increasing number of retirement offerings added to its portfolio.

Trust Chief Executive, Warick Dunn, says it's essential the legislation is fit for purpose and protects all parties.

*Continues on next page*

He says there is room to update the Act, but he has concerns, shared by the RVA, that some of the RVRA's demands would fundamentally alter a sector that, for many years, has been a leading provider of much needed housing for older New Zealanders.

"For example, the suggestion there should be a mandatory "buy back" would require the sector, on some estimates, to hold \$2bn of capital to support this. The sector doesn't carry that level of capital and would lead many operators to use a different operating model, such as unit titled villages.

"This would see residents wearing all maintenance and full village management costs and that would undermine one of the attractions of entering a retirement village, which is that the operator currently carries those costs."

The sector is aware of the need to avoid extended delays when re-licensing an ORA, but we are also impacted by the property market.

The reality is there is only a very small percentage of relicensing that would occur beyond a nine-month period.

Warick says the risk with many of the RVRA's proposals is that they will lead to significant changes in the way operators address housing for older New Zealanders.

"That would see residents bearing greater risk, and the likely introduction of operating models that undermine that sense of community that is so highly valued by the existing cohort of village residents."



A stylized, handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Warick Dunn'.

Warick Dunn  
Chief Executive  
The Masonic Villages Trust





## We've built a great community

In this article, the soon-to-retire Chair of The Masonic Villages Trust, Marie Gillies, reflects on her 12 years on the Board and three as Chair.

Marie will retire at the Trust's upcoming AGM in November.

She says it's time for new blood and new energy – and for her to spend a bit more time with family.

It's with mixed feelings that I write this.

I've done my dash on the Board and it's time to let the next generation take over. I'm very hopeful that will include younger Freemasons keen to get involved and contribute to our organisation which flies the Masonic flag so proudly.

In drafting this article, I couldn't help but look back. Not just on the past year, but on the last decade, and what we have achieved together.

And it struck me that one of the major differences between The Masonic Villages Trust and other, more commercially-focused retirement and aged care providers is that "we go where no one else will go".

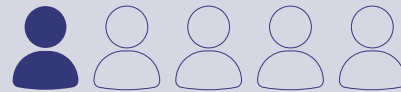
A key part of our philosophy is that we want older New Zealanders to be able to retire close to the friends and family they have known and lived near to their whole lives. Keeping it local is important to us.

In many cases that means building our villages and care facilities in the regions or smaller centres, as opposed to large metropolitan areas that might be more commercially attractive.

Our Wainuiomata Retirement Village is a case in point. Whenever I visit our village there, I am constantly told how grateful and appreciative residents are to be able to retire in comfort in the suburb they've called home for years.

Our Edale site in Marton is another example of our "keeping it local" philosophy, as is our recently acquired village in Martinborough, our Te Awahou Masonic Village in Foxton and the extension we are building in Levin.

By 2035, more than one in five New Zealanders will be aged 65 years or over, approximately 1.2 million people.



And while many do live in our main centres, a lot live in the rest of the country and want to remain close to home in their local communities in their retirement.

We started life over 60 years ago wanting to contribute to "our communities" and that's still our focus today as a charitable organisation.

I'm confident the Trust's next generation of leaders will respect and maintain that philosophy, and will maintain the momentum we created.

I'll continue to watch on with keen interest from the sidelines – or more accurately from my garden.

I'm definitely not a keen gardener, but needs must, so I expect I'll spend a fair amount of time doing what needs to be done outdoors.

I also expect to keep busy with the numerous groups and organisations I'm a member of, there's always family around and there'll be time to look for new activities. "Idle hands are the devil's tools", as the saying goes.

I do want to say a huge "thank you" to all those I've had the pleasure to work with at the Trust over the last 12 years.

I'll miss spending time with the staff and residents of our many villages and care facilities.

We truly have built a "great community" and I wish you all, all the best in making sure we continue to provide our particular brand of charitable Masonic support to those who need it.

Marie Gillies,  
Chair