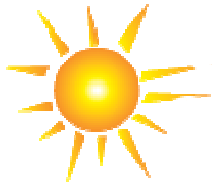


<http://www.sunshinecoastdaily.com.au/story/2011/09/28/woman-slugged-25k-after-eight-week-stay-exit-fee/>



**Sunshine Coast Daily**

## **Slugged \$25k after eight-week stay**

Janine Hill | 28th September 2011



NGAIRE Pye thought she was set for life when she moved into a serviced apartment at a luxury Peregian Springs retirement resort.

Eight weeks later she left disappointed and \$25,000 out of pocket.

Mrs Pye's experience has been described as a lesson in "look before you leap" for anyone considering buying in a retirement village.

Mrs Pye, 75, paid \$99,000 to move into the Gracemere serviced apartments at Aveo Peregian Springs Country Club last year.

But she said the bedroom ceiling fan was too noisy and ineffective for her to be able to sleep and the shower rose popped off on her first night there.

On the third and sixth nights the emergency phone rang persistently during the night, she said.

Another complaint was a window was hard to open and close.

She said an electrician was not sent to fix the fan until January 20, 51 days after she moved in, and it took three weeks before a maintenance man was sent to check the dryer and show her how to work it.

She gave notice to leave on January 1, which she said was not formally acknowledged until January 28. She was refunded \$74,250.

Mrs Pye said she understood she would be liable to an exit fee when she bought into the complex but did not expect to be charged, given the problems she had experienced.

"I expected them to waive that part of the bargain. If the place had been perfect I would have been happy," she said.

Member for Buderim Steve Dickson, who has gone into bat for Mrs Pye, said management should refund at least part of her money.

"Little old ladies don't need to be smashed," he said.

Justin Laboo, executive general manager of retirement for FKP, which owns the Aveo group, said he believed Mrs Pye had been treated reasonably.

Mr Laboo said the previous occupant of Mrs Pye's apartment had not mentioned any problems.

He said genuine attempts were made to fix the problems Mrs Pye had pointed out.

FKP said Mrs Pye bought her apartment for \$99,000 - a significant discount to the face value of the unit which influenced the terms of her contract namely her exit fee.

"In regards to the fan and the dryer - those issues were addressed as soon as management was made aware of them," the company said.

"Certainly, we'd like all our clients to be satisfied, don't get me wrong, but in relation to all the complaints that she made I think the process that we used to investigate was reasonable," Mr Laboo said.

Mr Laboo said Mrs Pye would have been aware of the exit costs when she signed a contract on the property.

Association of Residents of Queensland Retirement Villages president Les Armstrong said the exit charge - 23% of the initial buy-in fee for departing within the first 365 days of occupancy - was one of the highest he had seen.