



GREYPOWER MARLBOROUGH

President's Message

Hello fellow members.

In the last two months, many of the issues that Grey Power have been lobbying for are finally being addressed.

One of the big issues is standardised testing for renewals of older drivers licences which has been reviewed by the NZTA, politicians, and the medical profession who have all made recommendations to GP's that cognitive testing should no longer be used as the primary tool when assessing the driving ability for older drivers. Instead, they are recommending, if necessary, an on-road drivers test with a certified driving instructor to ensure the individual is competent behind the wheel of a car. Grey Power have been advocating for this change for over two years so we are pleased this has now come to fruition.

For some older drivers, having an on-road test may be as alarming as a cognitive test. However, on a positive note this means that the driver has time to read the road code and maybe go out for a couple of driving lessons so that any issues they are not sure of can be addressed. For older drivers who have been driving for many years, this will reassure them that they are following the current road rules.

There are also restrictive licences for older drivers that enable

them to keep driving such as holding a licence to only drive in daylight hours; these are worth checking out if appropriate.

Another major issue that Grey Power have been advocating for is more accountability through the health care sector, particularly regarding in-home community care and residential care.

A Place to Grow Old: Securing the future of Aged Care, is a report by the independent Aged Care Ministerial Advisory Group. This report is voicing recommendations to help make care more robust so that what is offered is correct and meets the needs of Aged Care clients.

Aged Care has been a real passion of mine and I have advocated strongly for change to the current model, so I am watching to see progress in this area and I will keep our membership posted.

Gayle Chambers,
President Marlborough Grey Power



Lifestyle Retirement Village overview

Retirement Village living: pros and cons:

There are currently almost 500 retirement villages in New Zealand. They have become an attractive option because they can offer a good balance between living independently while having access to support and healthcare. Villages comprise independent living options in a townhouse, villa or apartment, and (as needs increase) serviced apartments, care suites, rest homes, hospitals and dementia care units.

Village living is becoming increasingly popular, with a large percentage of residents reported as being happy with their experience. The number of retirement villages is only likely to increase due to our ageing population, and waiting lists are not uncommon.

How do they differ from usual home ownership?

Retirement villages are a lifestyle choice, not an investment decision. Downsides include limitations on the use of the unit, no capital gain, a deferred management fee (DMF) exit structure, and weekly maintenance fees.

Rather than buying the unit, a person is buying the right to occupy it and to use the facilities and services at the village. The Occupation Right Agreement (ORA) is not an interest in land. The resident does not acquire ownership rights. There are

limitations on the use of the unit and who may stay in the unit with the resident. The resident does not have the right to assign their interest or rent out the unit.

The resident will also incur weekly fees that cover everything from rates and garden maintenance to village amenities as well as a range of village-run activities. These fees also pay for exterior maintenance on your home, including cleaning your windows inside and out. Indexed weekly fees are variable and will increase once a year in line with the index they are set to.

Exit costs when leaving a village

If and/or when you leave the village, the deferred management fee will be deducted from the capital sum you or your estate receives when, and not before the operator re-licenses the unit. This fee is typically 25-30% of your original purchase price and accrues over the first few years you're in the village, usually 3 - 5 years.

Please note that there are several amendments to exit cost repayments currently agreed to by Cabinet. Other exit protections they agreed to in November 2025 include stopping weekly fees and fixed deductions accruing after ORA termination; restrictions on passing on marketing and sale costs; and requiring monthly progress reports. Cabinet points out

however, that these amendments are policy decisions and that the strengthened settings are not yet law and remain subject to the parliamentary process.

Key takeaways

- Retirement villages offer low maintenance living with onsite amenities, security, social interaction, and access to support and healthcare.
- Buying into a retirement village is a lifestyle choice, not an investment. But many residents say that moving into a village improved their quality of life.
- It's important to understand the upfront, ongoing, and exit costs associated with living in a retirement village.
- If you own your own home, you may be able to release considerable capital by selling your home and moving into a retirement village.
- Every village is different and living in a village doesn't suit everyone, so think about what's important to you and start exploring your options 3-5 years before you plan to move.
- It is indicative to note that the Retirement Villages Act 2003 provides that an intending resident must receive independent legal advice before signing an Occupation Right Agreement.

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GREYPOWER MARLBOROUGH

Notes from 2026 Federation Annual General Meeting (AGM)

The 2026 Federation AGM was held in Wellington June 9 – 11earlier this year (the 2027 meeting will be held next year in Invercargill). Marlborough Grey Power’s Treasurer, Murray South, represented our association at this year’s event. The outgoing Board had been working on a re-structuring proposition which was highlighted at the 2025 AGM and voted on at the current AGM. The proposition was

to do away with the Zone representative roles and replace them with 5 elected at-large members. This means that board members will be elected based on skill-sets rather than geographical location so as to have robust research on issues and other decision making concerns when advocating for seniors. The new board structure was voted in by a large majority of delegates present, and is comprised

as follows:
David Marshall (National President),
• Graeme Peters (acting Vice President),
• Margaret Sole (National Secretary),
• Lew Findlay (National Treasurer),
• Bill Obers, Carolyn Bates, Nerrily Frith, and Terry King. Tracey Martin, CEO of Aged

Care Association, gave a presentation on the state of aged residential care outlining sector challenges, trends, funding issues, and advocacy strategies. Ms Martin encouraged Grey Power to use its influence with decision makers to advocate for improved care access

in this area. Many other important and relevant issues were discussed, and we extend our thanks to the Federation Board for organising another successful AGM. *Murray South, Marlborough Grey Power.*

OFFICE SNIPPETS

- Help is available for you and your electronic device:
 - Digital Drop-in runs 10 – 11am each Wednesday morning at Te Kahu o Waipuna (Blenheim Library). It is for answering questions you may have about using your smartphone, other devices or Skinny Jump. Please bring the device you wish to enquire about and the passwords so you can access your device.
 - Citizens Advice Bureau Marlborough, best to make an appointment – 03 578 4272
 - Reap Marlborough - 03 578 7848
- Council meetings and the main committee meetings are notified via Antenno, the app used by Marlborough District Council for notifications. To see these notifications, you need to add '15 Seymour Street' into your 'places of interest'. It's not perfect, but you should receive the main meeting notifications. The smaller sub-committees are not notified this way, so you would have to look for them on the MDC website.
- Marlborough District Council is currently asking for feedback on a Draft Cemeteries Management Plan. This brings together Council’s current policies and practices for the cemeteries they manage, so there is clear guidance in one place on how they are operated, maintained and planned for the future. Feedback closes on 16 October 2026. Go to <https://www.marlborough.govt.nz/services/cemeteries> for more information or to make a submission.
- **We encourage you to look through your Discount Book, there are some great savings to be had.** Each month we like to acknowledge the support shown to our members by some of the businesses: Senior Chef

Marlborough (cooking classes), SMB Electrical Plus, Solutions 93, Sowmans Funeral Directors, Specky’s Handyman Services, Springlands Vet Centre, Stadium 2000, Tauwhiro Salon, The Firewood Company.

- We would especially like to thank Sowmans for being long-time sponsors of Grey Power Marlborough. Without them providing our printing solutions, we could not operate as efficiently and economically as we do.
- ### EVENTS:
- Meet the Candidates – hosted by Grey Power Marlborough, all welcome. See the notice on these pages.
 - Staying Safe, course for older drivers, Tuesday 20 October, at Redwood Lifestyle Village. Contact Age Concern to book a spot, 03 579 3457.



GREYPOWER
MARLBOROUGH Inc.

Meet the Candidates

Come and meet the Candidates, hosted by Grey Power Marlborough. We have three sessions available.

Candidates will be invited to speak.

When: Tuesday 13 October 2026, starting at 10am
Where: Star of the Sea Community Centre, St Mary’s Church, Blenheim

When: Tuesday 13 October 2026, starting at 7pm
Where: Star of the Sea Community Centre, St Mary’s Church, Blenheim

When: Wednesday 14 October 2026, starting at 2pm
Where: Endeavour Park Pavilion, Picton (181 Waikawa Road, Picton)

This is a Free event and open to all members of the public.

Grey Power Marlborough
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