



Speech by

MIKE KAISER

MEMBER FOR WOODRIDGE

Hansard 24 August 2000

PARKVIEW GARDENS

Mr KAISER (Woodridge—ALP) (7.12 p.m.): Some time ago I raised in this place the need to regulate pensioner units. They are not nursing homes, nor are they retirement villages, so they are not caught by the safety net of laws regulating the aged accommodation industry. Today I will provide further evidence of the need to introduce regulations, particularly a code of conduct and certain minimum requirements for tenancy contracts entered into by often vulnerable elderly people.

When I last raised this issue, I spoke about Parkview Gardens pensioner units in my electorate. I was contacted by many residents of Parkview Gardens to express their view that they were quite satisfied with that particular set of pensioner units. I am sure that is the case. However, many other residents are not. One resident, Mrs Coyne, was prepared to speak out publicly about her treatment at the Parkview Gardens pensioner units in my electorate when I last raised the issue in Parliament. Since then, I have received a letter from her relatives, which reads in part—

"Unfortunately we have been forced to remove my grandmother from these premises because of the intolerable behaviour of the managers, Ian and Jean Evans. Apart from calling my grandmother names, they showed their contempt for the elderly by telling her they 'hoped she had a heart attack'. My mother, my children and I were even followed out into the street and abused by these people for daring to speak to the media."

I am sure that all members of this Parliament would join with me in condemning this sort of thuggery and bullying of older people. I have referred this matter to the Minister for Fair Trading, who I commend for taking these matters seriously. Recently, she toured pensioner units to see the issues for herself, meeting residents, managers and tenancy groups. The Minister has advised me that Cabinet has decided to introduce the necessary regulations, and I am sure that the residents of pensioner units will welcome that. Mrs Coyne can take comfort from the fact that her courage will help to make residents more secure in the future.
