



Hello friends

I am taking the opportunity in this newsletter to get a bit personal, and introduce you to my perspective on the integrity and values of Stina and Garry Kerans, and their vision for a new housing model that meets society's need to invest in secure, high quality places that people can call home throughout their lifespan.

Have a watch and listen to this PowerPoint slide deck with my voice-over:

<https://www.sunvillagesco-op.au/copy-of-sun-village-projects>

Yes, we will provide the Parts 2 and 3 of this PowerPoint series for you to view online, but we'd love even more to get together face to face to hear from- and speak with Stina and Garry.

So here's our first SAVE THE DATE workshop event in Sydney:

Date: Sunday 5 February 2023

Venue: Warrawee Bowling Club

Time: 3 pm – 5 pm

I will send out a formal invitation and confirmation of details as soon as all is confirmed. Meanwhile, don't hesitate to contact me if you wish to know more about this workshop event being organized by Sun Villages Co-operative Ltd.

How we house ourselves matters

This week I have been scanning sections of Jess Scully's book "*Glimpses of Utopia, Real Ideas for a Fairer World*" (Jess is a City of Sydney Councilor). She writes of how the existing property market is failing people everywhere and is an advocate for co-operative housing solutions with collaboration between people in pooling their energy and resources to fund and build such housing projects in medium density developments. Experience elsewhere shows it is possible to reduce costs by 20%-35%, thus reducing the purchase price of a home in such a development. People vested in such projects are building for communities of people rather than financial return. Such investments are generally regarded as too high risk and too low a return on investment for institutional investors, typically wanting more of the industry standard of around 20% ROI.

Our Federal Labor government is targeting superannuation funds, valued at about \$3.3 trillion, to finance build-to-rent (BTR) apartment complexes, as an alternative to home ownership. State governments are incentivizing institutional investors with 50% land tax concessions and promoting the benefits to investors of stable longer term tenants retained at deemed affordable



prices, which reduces income lost to recurring maintenance and vacancies.

In the government policy and strategies, who will be the entity that owns these BTR properties, and extract most of the financial benefit? Who are these homes being designed for? What happens when a tenant gets to retirement age or is unemployed and may have their lease terminated and forced to move elsewhere? What are their prospects if they don't have rights to their own secure, quality place to call home? How well will these apartments cater for families of different sizes and stages in life? What say do the tenant residents have over the quality of the build and the living environment?

All of these issues have been addressed and resolved by the Sun Villages model in a fairer, more transparent way. Government and industry bodies have not to date given support to their model, presumably because it is disruptive to the extractive model of banking, property development and investment that funds private wealth. The Sun Villages model empowers people to be self-responsible, resulting in more freedom of choice and financial security.

So yes, I am skeptical about the Housing Accord and proposals for new social and affordable housing. What about you?

What consultation has there been with the public about such housing policy and potential extraction of our retirement funds, to the financial benefits of whom really?

Another book I am reading – with much enjoyment – is Julia Baird's "*Phosphorescence, On awe, wonder & things that sustain you, when the world goes dark*". In one chapter, she refers to the UN estimate that by the 2050's, more than two thirds of global population will inhabit urban areas (in highly digitalized environments – my words) from which there could be many unknown consequences, including much more mental illness associated with disconnection from nature.

When we are exposed to sunlight, trees, water, or even just a view of green leaves, we become happier, healthier and stronger...have more energy and a stronger sense of purpose...reduced cravings for alcohol, cigarettes and harmful foods"

[Baird J, 2020, *Phosphorescence*, HarperCollins Publishers]



How can we not be joyful with flowers about us?



How we house ourselves really does matter!

How can we all participate in creating better future housing?

My personal perspective

I desire to contribute what I can to social good, like improving housing livability and affordability for society at large. It makes sense to me that we can better collaborate together in helping to create a world we like, rather than be dictated to by some centralized body of control. This is why I am invested in the Sun Villages (Queanbeyan) project, for community and personal benefit; and why I choose to be involved very actively in my role as director and secretary of Sun Villages Co-operative Ltd.

Our co-operative values and principles

We are still in our infancy and learning how to do our roles well, and working hard towards attracting more members.

Co-operatives are based on the values of self-help, self-responsibility, democracy, equality, equity and solidarity. We believe in the ethical values of honesty, openness, social responsibility and caring for others.

We are subject to Co-operative National Law and Regulations, and Department of Fair Trading rather than ASIC. Yet we are

still businesses, to be run with good and compliant business processes.

The seven guiding principles are:

1. Voluntary and open membership
2. Democratic member control
3. Member economic participation
4. Autonomy and independence (controlled by members)
5. Education and training for members to be able to contribute effectively
6. Co-operation among co-operatives (to strengthen the co-operative movement)
7. Concern for the community (working for community sustainability).

I look forward to more opportunities to advocate for what we do and to grow our network of active membership. Feel free to contact me with your questions, and/or visit our website and submit an EOI.

And plan, if you can, to attend the February workshop to hear both from the Kerans and from myself.

Cheers for now

Ann Taylor
secretary

ann.sunvillagesco-op@proton.me