Juniper Retirement Living

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The volunteers who keep the Junibug rolling



Most days of the week, somewhere across Juniper's Rowethorpe village, a small buggy called the Junibug makes its rounds, carrying residential aged care residents, retirement living customers, staff and visitors to the cafe, the chemist, or wherever else they need to get to.

The Junibug runs on volunteers, a roster of drivers who each take a shift so that between them the buggy is out and about most days of the week. Margaret, a former financial counsellor, is one of them, driving her Thursday morning shift alongside fellow volunteer Jean, a former primary school teacher. Both are residents of Rowethorpe themselves.

For many of the drivers, getting behind the wheel started as a way of settling in. "My thinking was, well, if I drive the buggy, I get to know the village, and I get to know different people," Jean said.

That's proven true for Margaret too. She still remembers meeting one retirement living resident not long after the woman's husband had entered residential aged care, at a time when she was learning what it meant to be on her own again. "We sort of chatted and bonded about what it's like now cooking for one," Margaret said. "Every Friday now she phones up to come on the buggy. I consider her a friend."

Beyond the driving itself, the volunteers say the real value of the Junibug is in the conversations along the way. "It's just nice having a conversation with them and finding out about them," Jean said. "Sometimes they don't see a lot of people so it's about chatting to them and showing that you're interested, so that they're not alone."

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Hello from Jacob



It's been a big few months for Retirement Living at Juniper, and I wanted to share some of the key developments across our villages and the broader sector.

I'm pleased to share that Juniper has officially welcomed Juniper Esperance Retirement Village as part of the Juniper Esperance Aged Care Facility transition into our organisation. I was fortunate enough to be in Esperance to mark this important transition with staff, customers and their families. It was wonderful meeting some of the retirement living customers.

I'm also pleased to share some great progress on affordable housing for older Western Australians, with two milestones to celebrate. In Albany, Juniper acquired Wollaston Court Retirement Village earlier this year from Amana Living, securing continued affordable rental housing for local residents and building on our long-standing presence in the region. Our Euroka Retirement Living Village at Waterman's Bay has also welcomed 13 new residents to its newly rejuvenated units, bringing a wonderful sense of renewal and community connection to the village.

I also want to flag some important changes ahead for the retirement living sector. The Department of Local Government, Industry Regulation and Safety has released its implementation plan for the Retirement Villages Law Reforms, which will roll out in stages over the next two years, beginning with aged care rules, conduct rules and dispute resolution from 1 September 2026. We'll keep you updated as each stage approaches so you know what to expect.

There's a lot happening for Retirement Living at Juniper right now, and I look forward to sharing more as it all unfolds.

Kind regards,

Jacob Hollenberg
Chief Operating Officer – Accommodation

Ways to share your feedback

Raising concerns keeps everyone safer and helps us improve our care and services.

Speak to a Juniper contact

If something's on your mind, speak with your Juniper contact first. If you'd rather speak with someone outside your area, or your concern hasn't been resolved, contact Juniper on:

- **1300 313 000** or
- **juniper.org.au/enquiries/feedback**

Feedback >

Independent Whistleblower Service

For more serious concerns, such as unsafe behaviour, misconduct, fraud or abuse, our Independent Whistleblower Service is there for you. It's independent of Juniper and you can remain anonymous.

Report online

- **1300 687 927** using unique key Juniper and client reference number **Juniper2025.**
- **whistleblowingservice.org/juniper**

You can also raise concerns with an external agency or advocacy service.

Report online >







Juniper welcomes Esperance Retirement Living

On 1 July, Esperance Aged Care Facility officially joined Juniper, bringing its residential aged care home and retirement village into our community. This comes after Esperance Aged Care Facility's April announcement it had selected Juniper as a preferred partner, based on a strong alignment in values and commitment to the Esperance community.

Juniper CEO Russell Bricknell, Chief Operating Officer Care Jo Wilkinson and Chief Operating Officer Accommodation Jacob Hollenberg travelled to Esperance for the occasion, joining staff, residents and families for a morning tea to celebrate the transition.

In the weeks since, our team has been on the ground in Esperance, getting to know staff and residents and supporting the transition. In early August, the first meeting of the Esperance Advisory Body was held, set up to make sure local voices continue to shape and guide the services delivered in the community, with Jo Wilkinson and Director of Care Tendai Zinduru in attendance.

The wonderful volunteers who support the home were also celebrated, with a morning tea held to welcome them to Juniper and thank them for the outstanding service and contribution they bring to residents. More than 40 volunteers joined the event to be properly recognised for their ongoing dedication to the community.

The Esperance Retirement Living Village comprises 16 two-bedroom units, located close to the town centre and beaches. Co-located with the aged care home, the village and residential community adds to Juniper's strong presence of Retirement Living, residential aged care and Home and Community Care services in regional WA.



A message from Mandy

You may have heard that Western Australia's Retirement Villages legislation is changing, with the first stage taking effect on 1 September 2026, and I wanted to take a moment to walk you through what this means for you as a Juniper resident.

This first stage of the reforms is about bringing more clarity to the obligations both residents and operators have to one another, particularly around contracts, dispute resolution and how village finances are managed. At the moment, these obligations aren't always applied consistently across the sector, and the changes are designed to fix that by setting consistent rules for everyone.

One change I think will make a real difference for many of our residents relates to residential aged care. If you need to move into residential aged care before you've received the refund of your entrance payment from your village home, you'll now be able to request early payment of your Refundable Accommodation Deposit. This should make that transition a little easier financially, and it's a change we're glad to see for the peace of mind it can bring residents and their loved ones.

The reforms also introduce clearer conduct rules setting out what residents and operators can expect from one another, a formal process for resolving disputes if they arise, more opportunity



▲ Mandy McLearie, Retirement Living Manager

for residents to have a say in village budgeting decisions and set timeframes operators must meet when paying out exit entitlements.

Behind the scenes, we're already preparing for each stage of these reforms as they roll out over the next two years, so Juniper will be ready well before every change takes effect. For now, there's nothing you need to do differently as a resident, and we'll keep you updated as each stage draws closer.

If you ever have a concern, please know you can always reach out to us directly. Consumer Protection is also running information sessions for residents who'd like to learn more about the reforms in detail.

Register to upcoming information sessions here >>>

Volunteers Lyn and Carol bring the farm to Juniper Annesley

Lyn and Carol, both retirement living residents at Juniper Rowethorpe, have spent the past year running a fortnightly snack trolley through Juniper Annesley Residential Aged Care Home next door, restocking it themselves and learning what each resident liked.

“They’re just always so overwhelmingly happy to see us,” Carol said. “You knock on the door and one of the residents John just about falls out of his chair to get to us.”

More recently, the pair raised money for and helped bring an animal farm visit to Annesley residents, an idea of Lyn’s inspired by what she’d seen animals do for older people at events like the Royal Show. “A lot of the people here are animal lovers,” she said. “They had pets when they were living in their own homes. You go into their rooms and they’ve all got photos of their dogs and cats.”

It wasn’t just residents who loved the visit. Staff took turns holding the animals throughout the morning, with Residential Manager Asha Kayaga among those getting in on the action.

“They’re like our other family,” Lyn said. “It’s only what we’d want to be given when we get to that stage of life.”









Juniper volunteer Graeme celebrated a decade's service

Volunteer bus driver Graeme, was celebrated last week for 10 years of dedicated service, surprised as he stepped off his bus after a routine trip to be met by the Elimatta team with flowers and chocolates, delivered by Residential Manager Shila Rathnayake Arachchige.



Graeme's journey began just a year after he became a resident at Juniper Elimatta Retirement Living, when he heard there was a volunteer bus driver position going at the residential aged care home next door. "In those days you needed a truck licence to drive the bus," he said. "I had a truck licence from a previous job, so that's why I thought to sign up."

Ten years later, Graeme volunteers across three Juniper sites, driving residents on shopping runs and outings of their choosing. "They choose where they want to go," he said. "I just drive."

Juniper Volunteer Coordinator Helen Docherty said the outings meant more to residents than many people might realise.



"For many residents, these trips are a highlight of their week," she said. "Graeme has built meaningful relationships with residents, providing not just practical support as a driver, but also companionship and consistency."

Before retiring, Graeme spent decades working on Perth's racecourses at Ascot and Belmont. He said what kept him coming back was the difference the trips made and the connections he made along the way. "It's something to do, and I genuinely enjoy chatting with the residents," he said. "Every now and then, a couple of people will come back to the bus just to say thank you and have a chat, which is really nice."

For anyone thinking about volunteering, Graeme had one thing to add: "You'll get a lot of enjoyment out of it."

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Why what you believe about ageism counts

Our age beliefs matter. Research shows people with positive beliefs about ageing live longer, happier, healthier lives, one of the key takeaways from Juniper and the Australian Human Rights Commission's workshops "What's Age Got to Do With It?" held across Perth last week.

Workshops at Retirement Villages Elimatta and Rowethorpe, as well as Juniper Central and Hayloft Residential Aged Care Home drew a diverse crowd of Juniper customers and staff, students and community members, including City of Perth customer service officers and Men's Shed WA.

Presenter Dr Emily Steel's interactive sessions encouraged participants to discuss their own experiences of ageism and think about how they could do things differently.

"Those with positive beliefs about ageing live seven-and-a-half years longer," Dr Steel said.

She shared campaign videos challenging the prejudices we hold about age, including one participant's reflection: "When the focus is on my age, life gets a little bit harder."

Dr Steel drew a distinction between a "grain of truth" and unfair prejudice, noting that stereotypes become less and less useful as people age, with growing research showing improvements in cognitive and physical function among those aged 65 and over.

The ABC documentary Keep On Dancing, which followed older Australians with no dance training preparing for a public performance, was raised as proof of the potential we never test.

Asking people what they want, rather than rushing to help, was flagged as key. "Elder speak," which doesn't give someone time to respond or choose, tends to increase resistance to care.

"Age isn't the problem," Dr Steel said. "Ageism is."

Read our Whitepaper, The Voice of Older Western Australians here ›





Larry joins Chrystal Halliday as chaplain

Pastoral and spiritual care has expanded at Juniper Chrystal Halliday, with Larry Young joining as chaplain to both the Residential Aged Care home and the Retirement Living Village, the first time the village has had access to a dedicated chaplain.

"I've been through seasons where I needed someone to listen and simply be present, and that's stayed with me," Larry said. "Chaplaincy gives me a practical way to live that out, being present with people and walking alongside them without trying to fix anything."

Since arriving, Larry has continued the weekly chapel service, streamed to resident's rooms for those unable to attend in person, and introduced Hymns and Toast, a breakfast-time gathering using familiar hymns and songs. "I've observed that even those in significant cognitive decline will respond in simple ways, dancing while walking with their walkers and tapping their utensils on their plate," he said.

Juniper Pastoral Care and Spiritual Care manager David van Leen said the response since Larry arrived had been very positive. "Helping customers to feel supported, connected and cared for is what having a dedicated chaplain means for a community like Chrystal Halliday," he said.

"I hope residents know there is someone here for them, someone who will listen, take time, and not rush them," Larry said.

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Juniper creates affordable housing options in Waterman's Bay and Albany

It's been a big few months for affordable housing at Juniper, with two milestones to celebrate at Euroka Retirement Living Village in Watermans Bay and Wollaston Court Retirement Village in Albany.

At Juniper Euroka Retirement Living Village, a rejuvenation project welcomed 13 new residents, bringing the community to 27 residents in total. The refurbishment was designed to offer more affordable housing in the area, with the village close to public transport, shops and the ocean. Retirement Living Manager Mandy McLearie described a morning tea held to mark the occasion, saying there was "a real sense of community and renewal."

Chief Operating Officer Accommodation Jacob Hollenberg said the project reflected Juniper's commitment to affordable housing amid a difficult housing market. "Like so many Western Australians, the housing shortages and cost of living crisis is impacting many older people in this state," he said.





Juniper Euroka Retirement Living.

In Albany, Juniper acquired Wollaston Court Retirement Village from Amana Living, securing continued affordable rental housing for older people in the region. The 22-home village, near Spencer Park Shopping Centre, was near fully occupied at the time of the acquisition. Juniper CEO Russell Bricknell said the move built on Juniper's commitment to the Albany community, noting demand for affordable housing was soaring locally. Juniper honoured existing lease agreements, with Boronia Court and Community Centre coordinator Kerryn Proctor stepping into the role of Village coordinator one day a week.

"We want to extend a warm welcome to the residents of Wollaston Court to Juniper. We are excited to continue supporting residents as Amana Living has done for many years, giving Albany locals an affordable housing option to keep living in their communities, close to family, friends, and familiar surroundings," Mr Bricknell said.



Juniper Wollaston Court Retirement Village.

What's happening across Juniper



Juniper opens Fitzroy Crossing Staff Housing

Juniper celebrated the opening of 11 permanent staff homes in Fitzroy Crossing, next to Guwardi Ngadu Residential Aged Care Home, to address acute housing shortages in West Kimberley. CEO Russell Bricknell said the project was vital for attracting and retaining highly skilled aged care workers in remote areas, with the homes built on land leased from the Aboriginal Lands Trust and Bunuba Dawangarri Aboriginal Corporation.



Work on Juniper St Andrews will create more aged care beds

Juniper started a refurbishment project to reopen St Andrews Residential Aged Care Home in Balcatta, adding 76 much-needed beds for older Western Australians. CEO Russell Bricknell said the project would bring beds online in around 18 months, significantly faster than building new, at a time when WA aged care occupancy sat at 98 per cent.





Juniper welcomes stronger human oversight in aged care assessments

Juniper has welcomed the Australian Government's proposed legislative changes that will give assessors greater ability to intervene when the Integrated Assessment Tool produces a clearly incorrect outcome for a person's Support at Home services.

The changes follow sustained advocacy from Juniper, including its submission to the CHSP transition inquiry, which raised concerns about automated decision-making and the lack of meaningful review pathways.

Travel made possible with Juniper Home Care

With support from Juniper's Home Care team, customer Owen Carpenter will soon be jetting off to Singapore. It is a trip that, not long ago, Owen wasn't sure he'd be able to take. Owen has been a Juniper Home Care customer for close to three years, receiving occupational therapy and fortnightly social support outings that have helped him stay connected to the life he loves.

This November, thanks to a powered travel wheelchair sourced by his Juniper occupational therapist, he and his wife Averil will travel to Singapore and then on to Penang, where Avril has always dreamed of staying at a boutique hotel called The Blue Mansion.









Beth McCormack: a woman of many talents

Beth McCormack recently celebrated 20 years of living at Juniper Chrystal Halliday Retirement Living, making her the longest-standing resident there. Walk into her home and it becomes obvious that she is not someone who sits still, with her walls covered in her own paintings, an electronic piano in the corner, and whatever woodworking project she's currently working on.

Beth's path to painting began drawing blueprints at the Public Works Department's Architectural Division, where she studied hand drawing, architectural drawing and building construction at TAFE. Decades later, her walls are hung with landscapes, family portraits, and plenty of dogs. "I've painted over 100 dog portraits for their owners over the years," she said. "I enjoy doing this for other people, and I only charge something so that I can keep buying the canvases."

She is equally talented at music, a self-taught pianist and clarinet player who has performed for residents next door at Chrystal Halliday Residential Aged Care Home many times. "I'm about the same age as most of the people in the home, so I play all the songs I remember from when I was a kid, and they all know them and love them," she said.

Beth is also handy with timber, having built her own bed frame, computer desk and an outdoor shade structure from scratch.

Beth now stays social and active with carpet bowls four days a week at Scarborough, crocheting blankets for kids in wheelchairs, and joining a Thursday craft group open to the wider community. "I took six blankets up to Wheelchairs For Kids Australia last week," she said.

This year, residents marked Beth's 20-year milestone with a get-together in the common room, where some of her own paintings hang on the walls. Her advice to anyone considering the move to retirement living is simple: "Put your name down. It's wonderful, I just love it."