

Trafalgar offers free online training to empower more women in community housing schemes

Trafalgar is offering free online courses to help women become knowledgeable sectional title trustees and HOA directors.



Source: www.pixabay.com

“Lightstone research shows that while married couples still account for the biggest percentage of home sales, single women have been buying more homes than single men for the past 12 years – and that 47% of the homes they buy are in sectional title complexes and gated estates,” says Trafalgar MD Andrew Schaefer.

“This means that they have bought some 50,000 homes in community housing schemes over the past 24 months, and that single and married women together are now definitely in the majority among the owners of such homes. In addition, most single women who are renting in urban areas, with or without dependents, are choosing to live in these schemes rather than freehold homes, for security reasons.”

However, he notes, the composition of the executive committees in most community housing schemes do not reflect these facts. “The trustees of most sectional title schemes, and the directors of homeowners’ associations are predominantly men at this stage, as are building managers and caretakers.

“By contrast, 75% of our own staff are women who are very knowledgeable and effective when it comes to property management, so while our free online courses are of course open to everyone, we would really like to see more women who live in community housing schemes using the opportunity to become empowered as informed trustees and directors of those schemes, confident they can act in compliance with all current legal and governance requirements.”



Five reasons new directors, trustees should be inducted

Jeff Gilmour 27 Aug 2021



Ever-growing need for training

Schaefer notes that with community housing options now representing at least 30% of property sales, compared to just 15% five years ago, there is an ever-growing need for trustees and directors who are trained to handle budgets, levies and insurance matters as well as the daily security, cleaning and maintenance issues that arise in community schemes – and can also ensure a harmonious living environment through the effective application of management and conduct rules.

“Not everything can or should just be left up to management companies, but in our experience the majority of trustees and directors are still 'amateurs' who have been elected at the AGM not for their property knowledge but because they were the only individuals willing to take on the unpaid and often difficult job of serving their communities.

“But now their role is becoming increasingly complex, especially with regard to the requirements of the Community Housing Schemes Ombud Service and the Protection of Personal Information Act, and the main aim of our courses is to help them fill the knowledge gap and raise the level of professionalism in our sector - while also addressing the legal requirement* for trustees, especially, to educate themselves about what is required of them.”

The Trafalgar courses, launched last year, include a basic course for sectional title owners, sectional title for trustees, training for HOA directors and courses for sectional title building managers/caretakers as well as HOA estate managers.

All of these can be accessed [here](#).

Since last year, Trafalgar has also been running a series of public webinars on various community housing scheme issues. These can be accessed [here](#).

**Regulation 14 of the Community Schemes Ombud Services Act stipulates that the executives of community schemes (trustees and directors) must take reasonable steps to educate themselves about their schemes, their affairs and activities and the legislation and governance documentation in terms of which the scheme operates.*

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