

What's it like living in a retirement village?

Patricia, a resident at BaptistCare's Angus Bristow Village in Elderslie, shares her experiences of retirement living for anyone considering the move.



Patricia is celebrating her first anniversary of retirement living, having recently downsized from her family home to Angus Bristow Retirement Village in October 2022. At 87 years old, she says it's one of the best decisions she's ever made.

We spoke to Patricia about the benefits of retirement living, her experience of downsizing, and what advice she'd give to others considering the move.

Why did you decide to move into a retirement village?

I loved my old family home in Toongabbie, Greater Western Sydney, but it was becoming

increasingly difficult to maintain – particularly the gardening. My husband died a long time ago, and my daughters had left home, so it was just me rattling around this big house.

One day, the penny dropped, and I thought, why not move to a retirement village? I can still live independently while enjoying a sense of close community and support.

There are things I miss of course, like my pool, but there are local facilities here too, and so far, the benefits have far outweighed the challenges. I don't regret my decision for a minute.

How did you know which retirement village was right for you?



Patricia says she's felt welcomed by the Angus Bristow retirement community from the moment she arrived.

My daughter Christine and I visited this area to look at a few retirement communities. We knew that Elderslie would be a convenient location for my family to come and visit.

We'd visited a few villages, but when we arrived at Angus Bristow, something just felt right. The community was relaxed and welcoming, and the BaptistCare management team was friendly and helpful.

I also liked the environment and the fact that it's not too hilly so I can walk around easily. There are beautiful grounds here and a lovely pond to look at, as well as pleasant walking paths and community garden beds.

As soon as we learned that a villa had become available, we decided to jump on the opportunity.

What has been your experience of retirement living so far?



Patricia enjoys chatting with other Angus Bristow retirement village residents during her morning walk.

Moving to Angus Bristow Village was the best decision I ever made. I've only been here a year, but I've felt so welcomed, which has helped me to settle in quickly.

The resident population is a dynamic mix – some people have lived here for decades, while others have only been here a short time, like me. There are single people as well as couples, and a mix of ages. One thing everyone has in common though – they look out for one another. It's a real community.

I found this out for myself when I had to go to hospital recently for a spinal operation. I was there for three months. While I was in hospital a resident offered to care for my gardens which made a big difference for me when I returned home. It's lovely to live in a caring community like that.

The [BaptistCare at home team](#) are based in the office here at Angus Bristow and they've helped me install handrails and other modifications in my home to help make life easier since my operation. They've also assisted me in signing up for a [Commonwealth Home Support](#)

Program (CHSP) which means that I can access a range of home support services like domestic support or personal care.

Financially, it's been a good move for me too. You don't pay any rates, just the recurrent village fees. You've got to do your homework, mind you, and check that you understand the costs involved. Each person is different, but for me, it's worked out very well.

What are the benefits of retirement living?

The social side is well worth it. Retirement living offers a wonderful opportunity to meet new people and make friends. We have many activities happening throughout the week in the community hall that are open to everybody. There are Scrabble sessions, pool games, regular morning and afternoon teas, and brain game activities, to name but a few.



For Patricia, retirement living has offered a sense of security, knowing there's always someone close by in case of any issue.

I think that's one of the advantages of living in a retirement community – there are opportunities to do all these things and not have to go anywhere!

I know I'm not alone in feeling much safer living here. It's just knowing somebody will be there if there is an issue that gives you absolute peace of mind, and there is such a caring environment here at Angus Bristow.

The maintenance aspect is also taken care of, which has been fantastic. I can call on support from the management team for all the everyday little things that might go wrong in the house. The gardeners take care of my front and back lawns which is a great help.



Patricia downsized from her large family home to a three-bedroom house (pictured) at Angus Bristow Retirement Village in Elderslie.

Have there been any challenges?

Downsizing from my big family home was a big undertaking - I had accumulated a lot of items over the years!

I've always been a sewer and I could have started a shop with all my fabrics and craft materials! I donated some of my items to Lifeline and Salvo's, and my family also supported me with the downsizing process.

My new, three-bedroom house is the perfect size for me though. I have a master bedroom, a second bedroom for visitors, and a third bedroom which I use as a hobby room.

I've had to take time to adjust to my new surroundings and get to know the area, but it's been made so much easier by all the support I've had from BaptistCare and the other residents. The village is very close to shopping areas such as Camden and Narellan, all less than a ten-minute drive.

Growing our community

BaptistCare is thrilled to be extending the retirement living community in Elderslie with an additional 36 brand-new stylish villas - due to launch in late 2024 - providing more homes for those wishing to move into our popular Angus Bristow Retirement Village.

The community will also soon enjoy the addition of a new 96-bed aged care home situated just a few minutes' walk from the neighbouring retirement village.

Due to open in 2024, this modern aged care home will provide care for those wishing to remain in the Elderslie community and will be designed in the increasingly popular “small household” model. It will also feature a hair salon, café, chapel, health clinic, onsite parking, dementia-specific garden design, and internal courtyards. Learn more about this exciting development at baptistcare.org.au/blog/elderslie-expansion-plans-unveiled.

Find your nearest BaptistCare retirement community

If you're curious to see the benefits of retirement living for yourself, why not book a tour of your local village?

Use our handy online tool to find a location in New South Wales or Canberra at baptistcare.org.au/locations/retirement-community-locations.

BaptistCare has been trusted by thousands of Australians across the retirement living, aged care and community service sectors since 1944. While we are not-for-profit, there are a few things that we certainly are for: outstanding quality and a quest to truly make a difference, not just in our Retirement living communities, but in all communities.