

STRATA COMMUNITY & LIVING



IN THIS ISSUE:

BEYOND COMPLIANCE: HOW BETTER BUILDING
PRACTICES IMPROVE LONG-TERM STRATA OUTCOMES
NSW PRODUCTIVITY AND EQUALITY COMMISSION
RELEASES REVIEW
DOES YOUR STRATA LENDER PAY COMMISSIONS?
ABANDONED GOODS IN STRATA: LEGAL OBLIGATIONS
AND STEPS FOR COMPLIANCE



IN THIS EDITION



- 03 PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE
- 04 NSW PRODUCTIVITY AND EQUALITY COMMISSION RELEASES REVIEW
- 06 THE HIDDEN POWER OF SCAFFOLDING IN STRATA REMEDIAL PROJECTS
- 08 ABANG OTHOW: A STORY OF STRENGTH THIS INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY
- 12 BEYOND COMPLIANCE: HOW BETTER BUILDING PRACTICES IMPROVE LONG-TERM STRATA OUTCOMES
- 14 DOES YOUR STRATA LENDER PAY COMMISSIONS?
- 16 HOW OFTEN DO I NEED TO CHECK A ROOF?
- 20 STAY AHEAD OF BUILDING DEFECTS | HOW PRELIMINARY ADVICE SAFEGUARDS YOUR SCHEME
- 22 WHY PAINTING SHOULD BE PART OF YOUR SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY
- 26 ABANDONED GOODS IN STRATA: LEGAL OBLIGATIONS AND STEPS FOR COMPLIANCE
- 28 UNDERSTANDING THE COMPLAINT MANAGEMENT PROCESS AT SCA (NSW)

FROM THE PRESIDENT



March has been a significant month for our sector, and SCA (NSW) has been at the forefront.

On March 24, we welcomed the release of the NSW Productivity and Equality Commission's Review of the Market Impacts of Prohibiting Conflicting Payments. Commissioner Achterstraat's [final report](#) examined four options and delivered seven recommendations, including a prohibition on strata managers accepting commissions, a three-year, phased transition period to minimise impacts and support industry adjustment and a subsequent reduction in regulatory burden for strata managers by removing the requirement to seek three quotes for insurance.

The SCA (NSW) Board will be meeting in April to review its current position on the voluntary phase out of insurance commissions. To help members prepare, we have now held eight workshops, including the most recent session I attended in Newcastle on 26 March, with more than 220 participants engaged to date. We now await Minister Chanthivong's consideration of the report's recommendations.

On March 18, Minister Chanthivong introduced the [Property and Stock Agents Amendment \(Underquoting and Other Agent Conduct\) Bill 2026](#) to the NSW Legislative Assembly. While the bill's primary focus is underquoting in the real estate sector, it also proposes new powers to direct strata managing agents to undertake further education and training instead of issuing a PIN, reforms to approve a standard form agency agreement and the Continuing Professional Development provider framework.

Three pieces of strata related legislation are presently being debated in Parliament, including the Strata Schemes Legislation Amendment (Miscellaneous) Bill 2025 and Fair Trading and Building Legislation Amendment 2026 which are set for further Legislative Council debate in May. SCA (NSW) has actively contributed feedback to all three, supporting sensible reform where necessary and pushing back where proposals clearly overreached. My thanks go to our Policy & Legislation Committee, led by Matthew Jenkins, for their substantial work in shaping our submissions.

[Comments and submissions are now being sought](#) on SCA (NSW)'s proposed new Professional Standards Scheme application. All members are encouraged to make a submission in support of our application by the close of business on Friday, April 24.

On March 5, we celebrated International Women's Day at the Art Gallery of NSW. It was a wonderful afternoon recognising the advancement, leadership, and inclusion of women across our state's strata sector. Thank you to everyone who joined us in marking this important occasion.

I wish all our members a safe and enjoyable Easter break.



SCA (NSW) PRESIDENT



NSW PRODUCTIVITY AND EQUALITY COMMISSION RELEASES REVIEW

SCA (NSW) welcomes the release of the NSW Productivity and Equality Commission's review of the market impacts of prohibiting conflicting payments.

Commissioner Achterstraat, in response to a request from Minister Chanthivong for an evidence-based report to support NSW Government decision-making, has found that a phased transition of the strata sector from a commissions-based model to a fee for service structure could generate net benefits for NSW of more than \$300 million over the next fifteen years.

We note that the [review's final report](#) examined four options for the Government to consider and makes [seven recommendations](#), including a prohibition on strata managers accepting commissions, supporting industry and owners with a gradual, three-year transition period to minimise the impacts across the broader sector and following this change, a reduction in regulatory burden for strata managers by removing the requirement to seek three quotes for insurance.

"Last year, the SCA (NSW) Board resolved to support and encourage members to begin a phased replacement of insurance commissions for strata managing agents. This voluntary transition commenced on 1 January 2026," said SCA (NSW) President, Mr Robert Anderson.

Our sector has been aware of the Government's intention to review insurance remuneration practices for some time, and the Board's decision was only taken after careful consideration and consultation. It was our ongoing commitment to raise professional standards, strengthen consumer trust, and deliver better outcomes for owners and residents living in strata communities."

TO SUPPORT A PHASED TRANSITION, SCA (NSW) HAS ALREADY CONDUCTED SEVEN MEMBER WORKSHOPS AND SEMINARS, ATTENDED BY OVER 200 PARTICIPANTS AND WILL CONTINUE TO SUPPORT AND ENCOURAGE OUR MEMBERS AS PART OF THIS PROCESS.

“To support and inform our decision-making, we commissioned independent research and policy analysis from AEC Group and drew from our engagement with government, consumer groups, members and insurance and industry stakeholders over the last two years. The benefits of a gradual, phased transition and a shift away from negative consumer sentiment relating to commissions came through very strongly.”

SCA (NSW) believes that a three-year, gradual phased replacement of insurance commissions presents the best opportunity to move forward for the industry and consumers:

- For strata managing agents and their businesses, this reform will deliver certainty, business sustainability and improve trust and credibility with clients
- For apartments owners and owners’ corporations, this reform will deliver transparency, accountability and pricing simplicity
- Strata managing agents are proud to talk about the value they bring to consumers and why they should be paid a fee to carry out critical tasks in relation to strata insurance.

“To support a phased transition, SCA (NSW) has already conducted seven member workshops and seminars, attended by over 200 participants and will continue to support and encourage our members as part of this process. We now await Minister Chanthivong’s consideration of the review findings and will make further comment in due course,” Mr Anderson said.

Key dates and figures:

- 1 July 2024 – Strata Insurance Best Practice disclosure guide mandatory for members.
- 1 July 2025 – SCA National Code of Ethics implemented.
- 1 January 2026 – SCA (NSW) commenced a voluntary phased replacement of insurance commissions for strata managing agents.
- 17% of NSW Residents live in Strata, which is just under 1.5m people.
- There are 91,346 strata schemes in NSW.
- There are more than 1 million lots (1,073,277) in NSW.
- 75% of lots in NSW are managed by SCA members.
- \$486B of strata property value in NSW (Total insured value of schemes).

Further media enquiries:

- Robert Anderson, SCA (NSW) President is available for interview.
- Please contact: Andrew Jefferies, SCA (NSW) Senior Policy and Advocacy Advisor
- (m) 0427 928 111
- (e) andrew.jefferies@strata.community

THE HIDDEN POWER OF SCAFFOLDING IN STRATA REMEDIAL PROJECTS

DAPCOR REMEDIAL

When scaffolding arrives, many strata committees see disruption, privacy concerns, and a major cost. For strata managers, early access planning (often called Phase 1, Access and Preparation) is something else entirely; it is the point where risk becomes clear, scope becomes reliable, and the project is set up to run smoothly.

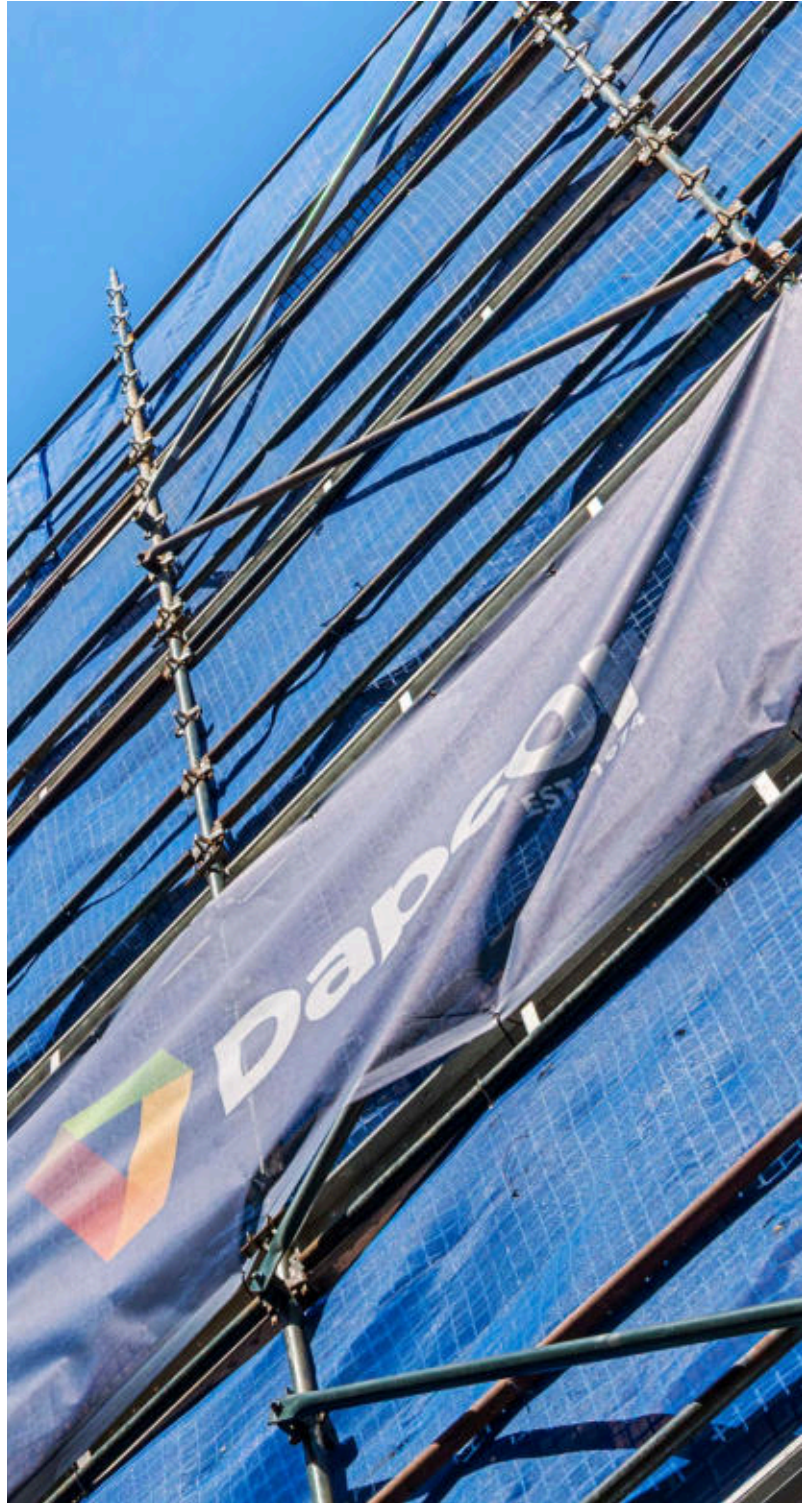
In remedial works, the biggest problems usually start early, not at the end. Rushed access, unclear scope, and poor resident management can lead to budget blowouts, delays, and frustration across the scheme. A well-managed access stage helps protect the owners' corporation on all three fronts: cost, liveability, and compliance.

1) Reduce variations by confirming the real scope

Many remedial projects begin with reports based on ground-level inspections and drone footage. These are useful, but they cannot confirm every junction, membrane detail, or hidden defect.

Once access is installed, close-up inspection of the facade and affected areas becomes possible. This is where assumptions are tested. Issues that look minor from the street can be confirmed as wider deterioration, such as concrete spalling, corrosion, or waterproofing failures at key junctions.

For the owners' corporation, this early confirmation supports better decisions and a more accurate budget. For the strata manager, it reduces the risk of repeated variations and keeps committee confidence stable.



IF YOUR COMMITTEE IS HESITANT ABOUT SCAFFOLDING, THE RIGHT ACCESS PLAN CAN HELP SHIFT THE CONVERSATION FROM DISRUPTION TO CERTAINTY.

2) Keep the building functioning during works

A remedial site is a lived environment. Resident disruption is often the biggest day-to-day challenge of delivery.

Early access planning is the best time to reduce friction by:

- keeping entry paths, foyers, and driveways usable where possible
- establishing clear safety zones with hoarding, netting, and signage
- planning staged access and resident notices so people know what to expect and when

These steps do not remove disruption, but they make it predictable and easier to manage.

3) Build the project record from day one

Strata projects are increasingly documentation-driven. Early access provides an opportunity to create a clear baseline record of existing conditions and early findings once the facade is visible. This supports inspections, reporting, and close-out, and it helps answer questions later from committees, consultants, and future buyers.

The Dapcor partnership

Dapcor supports strata managers by bringing structure to early access planning, scope confirmation, and staged documentation. With an iCIRT 4.5-star rating, Dapcor focuses on safe, predictable delivery that protects the building and the people who live in it.

If your committee is hesitant about scaffolding, the right access plan can help shift the conversation from disruption to certainty.





ABANG OTHOW: A STORY OF STRENGTH THIS INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

'Before civil war robbed Abang Othow of her childhood, she lived among mango trees near the river Nile in Sudan where the smell of her mother's cooking laced the air and "life was surreal".

Those are the memories she desperately clung to when, at age five, she was left "alone" to flee between the nations of northeast Africa as they were being engulfed by unspeakable violence.' - 7 News – [Left alone in a war zone at age 5, Abang tracked down her family 13 years later.](#)

Abang's journey, poignantly captured in her feature on 7 NEWS, began in the shadows of war as a five-year-old separated from her family during the brutal civil conflict in Sudan and ended with her arrival as a refugee in Australia.

Abang shared her extraordinary life journey at the recent SCA (NSW) International Women's Day Afternoon Tea, leaving the audience deeply inspired.

We spoke to Abang about her incredible journey and what community means to her.

How important is the strength of a community?

Community is everything. I have learned that we achieve nothing alone. Community educates us, shapes our leadership, and, for me, became the parent I did not always have. It holds us accountable, lifts us when we fall, and reminds us of who we are when the world tries to erase us.

How does empathy from everyday Australians contribute to the successful settlement and welcoming of refugees and people seeking asylum?

Empathy changes everything. It turns a stranger into a neighbour. It opens doors to accommodation, education, and meaningful employment. It restores dignity. When everyday Australians choose to see, listen and include, refugees do not just survive, they belong. And when we belong, we give back. That is how communities grow stronger.

You are a storyteller, educator, author, ambassador, researcher, mother. What stands out as the proudest moment for you so far?

Helping people move from survival to thriving is one of my greatest honours. But my proudest role is being a mother. I mother with intention, even though I grew up without mine. To break cycles, to lead with love, and to raise a child who feels safe and seen, lives with integrity; that is my deepest achievement.



One of the things that now sustains you is giving back. Tell us about Buckets of Hope.

Buckets of Hope began as a visualisation strategy I created during one of the most traumatic periods of my life. I needed a way to hold my fear, my memories, my growth, and my resilience without being overwhelmed. Over time, it evolved beyond mindfulness. Today, it is a storytelling and leadership framework that helps people move from survival to thriving, organise their emotions, reclaim their narrative, and rise with intention.

To learn more about Buckets of Hope, head to – [Buckets of Hope by Abang Othow](#) | [Discover the Journey](#).





Images from the SCA (NSW) International Women's Day 2026



ABOVE: Abang Othow, Robert Anderson, Kim Jonsson
Below: Liza Perera



BEYOND COMPLIANCE: HOW BETTER BUILDING PRACTICES IMPROVE LONG- TERM STRATA OUTCOMES

PAYNTER DIXON

**paynter
dixon**

Remedial works in strata buildings are often viewed through a narrow lens, fix what's broken, meet compliance requirements, and move on. While this approach may address immediate risks, it can miss a much larger opportunity: using remediation as a catalyst for better, more durable building outcomes.

Across New South Wales, strata schemes are grappling with ageing assets, complex defects, and rising maintenance costs. In this environment, simply achieving minimum compliance is no longer enough. The more meaningful question for strata managers, committees, and owners is not just "How do we fix this?" but "How do we make this building perform better for the next 20–30 years?"

A more strategic approach to remediation recognises that these projects are not isolated repairs - they are part of a building's lifecycle. Thoughtfully planned remedial works can improve durability, reduce future maintenance liabilities, and create more resilient assets for owners and residents alike.

This starts at the diagnostic stage. Detailed investigations, robust reporting, and constructive collaboration between strata managers, building consultants, and experienced remedial builders create a stronger foundation for decision-making. When the right expertise is brought together early, strata schemes can move beyond reactive repairs toward proactive solutions that address underlying issues rather than symptoms.

EQUALLY IMPORTANT IS HOW REMEDIAL PROJECTS ARE MANAGED AND COMMUNICATED. WHEN STRATA COMMUNITIES UNDERSTAND NOT JUST WHAT IS BEING DONE, BUT WHY IT IS NECESSARY AND HOW IT WILL BENEFIT THEM OVER TIME, THERE IS GREATER CONFIDENCE IN BOTH THE PROCESS AND THE OUTCOME.

During delivery, the choice of materials, construction methods, and sequencing can significantly influence long-term performance. High-quality remediation isn't just about patching defects, it's about selecting systems that are fit for purpose, weather-resistant, and compatible with the building's original design and environment. This is particularly critical in coastal or high-exposure locations, where durability must be a central consideration rather than an afterthought.

Equally important is how remedial projects are managed and communicated. When strata communities understand not just what is being done, but why it is necessary and how it will benefit them over time, there is greater confidence in both the process and the outcome. Transparent planning, regular updates, and collaborative decision-making help align expectations and reduce the likelihood of conflict or disappointment later.

At Paynter Dixon, we view remediation as an opportunity to add value, not simply fulfil a contract. Our approach combines technical expertise, practical constructability insights, and a design-construct mindset to deliver solutions that prioritise quality, longevity, and real-world performance. We work closely with strata managers and consultants to ensure decisions made today create better outcomes for tomorrow.

Ultimately, the most successful remedial projects are those that look beyond compliance and embrace a broader vision of building stewardship. By investing in better building practices now, strata schemes can reduce future risk, protect property values, and create safer, more resilient communities, outcomes that benefit everyone involved.



Does your strata lender pay commissions? It's a fair question - and the answer should be simple.

DOES YOUR STRATA LENDER PAY COMMISSIONS? IT'S A FAIR QUESTION - AND THE ANSWER SHOULD BE SIMPLE.

PAUL MORTON, CEO & GEMMA DAVEY, HEAD OF BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT
LANNOCK STRATA FINANCE

Let us be absolutely clear: Lannock Strata Finance

- has never paid
- does not currently pay
- and will never pay

any form of commission or benefit to a strata manager for arranging strata finance. This was a founding principle when the company wrote its first strata loan in 2004. It remains a cornerstone of our success in delivering the best way to fund capital works in Australia.

See: lannockstratafinance.com/our-pledge

Why does Lannock not pay commissions?

Taking out a strata loan is a decision that affects every lot owner in the building. Strata managers play a key role in assisting owners to make good decisions about finance. No aspect of the decision should allow anyone to raise any doubt of any kind that the manager or agency is influenced by anything other than acting in the owners' best interests. It is that simple.

Lannock pioneered strata finance and we continue to set the benchmark.



SOME OTHER STRATA LENDERS ASSERT THAT THEY OPERATE ON A COMMISSION-FREE BASIS - BUT THEIR FINE PRINT CAN TELL A DIFFERENT STORY.

Do any other strata lenders pay commissions?

Some other strata lenders assert that they operate on a commission-free basis - but their fine print can tell a different story. Owners corporations need clarity, not hidden small-print qualifications. The question "how do I know if my strata loan is commission-free?" should never require a lawyer to answer. Lannock has set the standard on transparency and stability for owners corporations. The question to ask is whether the lender you are talking to meets the benchmark we set.

What should owners expect from a Strata Lender?

The interest rate is never the whole story. The owners are entering a relationship that could last fifteen years - through project delays, committee changes, and owners coming and going. The right lender should meet every one of these standards:

- **No commissions paid** - ever, unconditionally, confirmed in writing
- **Prompt proposal** - a tailored proposal within 24-48 hours so you know where you stand
- **Credit assessment on the owners corporation, not individual owners** - no personal financial information, no guarantees, no mortgages or liens on any lot
- **Flexible terms** - up to 15 years, interest-only periods available up to 4 years, no fees on drawdowns or early repayment
- **Pre-approval available before the general meeting** - so owners vote with certainty, not in principle
- **Attends your meetings** - to answer owner questions directly, without marketing jargon, with state-specific documentation prepared for your committee
- **Multiple projects bundled into a single facility** - one loan, one lender, one repayment
- **Levy repayments 100% tax deductible for investor owners** - the majority in most buildings
- **Trusted by government** - a lender that complies fully with strata and tax legislation, and has been appointed to deliver state and federal cladding remediation programs, is one you can rely on for the long term
- **Funding capacity and stability for the life of the loan** - some entrants to strata finance have a history of exiting the market mid-term

Some lenders offer hybrid strata loans with the option of 'paying up front' (it's not an upfront payment, it's an unsecured loan from the owner to the corporation of which they are a member). This can look attractive at first glance, but these are complex products with hidden costs, risks, and tax traps confirmed by the Australian Tax Office (ATO).

A Lannock Loan is the best way of funding capital works in strata.

Call 1300 851 585 or visit lannock.com.au



HOW OFTEN DO I REALLY NEED TO CHECK A ROOF?

APT ROOFING



For many strata buildings, the roof is one of the most overlooked assets until something goes wrong. Because roofs are generally out of sight, they often fall into the “if it isn’t leaking, it must be fine” category. Unfortunately, by the time visible damage or internal leaks appear, the underlying issue may have been developing for years.

Regular roof inspections are one of the most effective ways for strata managers and owners’ corporations to prevent costly repairs and extend the life of the building.

Why Roof Inspections Matter

The roof is the primary barrier protecting a building from weather, water ingress, and structural deterioration. Over time, exposure to sun, rain, wind, and debris naturally causes roofing materials to deteriorate.

Common issues that develop gradually include:

- cracked or slipped tiles
- loose ridge capping or pointing
- deteriorated flashing
- blocked gutters and downpipes
- corrosion on metal roofing
- failing sealants or waterproofing elements

If these issues are identified early, they can usually be repaired quickly and at relatively low cost. Left unchecked, however, they can lead to internal water damage, mould, insulation deterioration, and structural damage.

ONE OF THE MOST COMMON MISCONCEPTIONS IS THAT INSPECTIONS ARE ONLY NECESSARY WHEN SOMETHING GOES WRONG. IN REALITY, PREVENTATIVE MAINTENANCE IS SIGNIFICANTLY MORE COST EFFECTIVE.

How Often Should a Strata Roof Be Inspected?

As a general guideline, strata buildings should have their roofs professionally inspected **at least once every 12 months**.

Annual inspections allow contractors to identify minor issues before they become significant problems. Many buildings also align roof inspections with routine maintenance schedules or annual building condition reviews.

In addition to annual inspections, it is also recommended to have roofs checked:

After severe storms or extreme weather events

High winds, heavy rain, and hail can dislodge tiles, damage flashing, or cause debris to block drainage systems.

Before major seasonal weather changes

Inspections before the wetter months can help ensure drainage systems and waterproofing elements are functioning correctly.

Older buildings may need extra TLC...

The age of the roof also plays a role in determining inspection frequency. Older roofs naturally experience more wear and tear, particularly on buildings exposed to coastal conditions or large amounts of debris from surrounding trees.

For roofs that are **20 years or older**, inspections may be recommended **every 6 to 12 months**, depending on the roofing material and the overall condition of the system.

The Cost of Delayed Maintenance

Small issues such as cracked tiles, minor flashing failures, or blocked drainage systems can usually be repaired quickly and at relatively low cost. However, when these problems go unnoticed, they can lead to water ingress, internal damage, mould growth, and costly structural repairs.

One of the most common misconceptions is that inspections are only necessary when something goes wrong. In reality, preventative maintenance is significantly more cost effective.

For strata properties, the cost of internal repairs and insurance claims often far exceeds the cost of routine maintenance.

Proactive inspections allow building managers and strata committees to plan maintenance works in a controlled and cost-effective way rather than responding to emergency leaks.

What a Professional Roof Inspection Should Include

A thorough roof inspection should review all major roofing components, including:

- roofing tiles or metal sheeting
- ridge capping and pointing
- flashing around penetrations and parapets
- gutters, valleys, and drainage systems
- visible structural elements
- signs of water ingress or deterioration

Where required, contractors may also provide condition reports, photographs, and maintenance recommendations to assist strata committees with long term planning.

Protecting One of the Building's Most Important Assets
For strata buildings, the roof protects the entire structure and everything beneath it. Routine inspections are a simple but critical step in protecting that asset.

By implementing a regular inspection and maintenance program, strata managers can reduce unexpected repairs, extend the life of the roofing system, and provide greater peace of mind for owners and residents.

Any questions? You know who to call...



Helping strata communities take control of their financial universe and Be Better Off since 1985.



KELLY+
PARTNERS
CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS

kellypartners.com.au

Proud Supporters of



strata
community
association®

National Education Partner



STAY AHEAD OF BUILDING DEFECTS | HOW PRELIMINARY ADVICE SAFEGUARDS YOUR SCHEME

BANNERMANS LAWYERS



1. What Is Preliminary Advice?

Preliminary advice is initial advice provided to owners corporations to help identify potential building defects, understand statutory warranty rights and clarify the options available for pursuing a claim.

It offers a high level overview of relevant legislation and regulatory frameworks, including:

- the Home Building Act 1989 (“HBA”),
- Design and Building Practitioners Act 2020 (“DBPA”),
- Home Owners Warranty Insurance (“HOWI”), and
- Strata Building Bond and Inspections Scheme (“SBBIS”).

Our advice explains how each impacts your scheme’s time limitations and obligations.

Our advice is tailored specifically for owners corporations seeking clarity about their legal position, the parties potentially responsible and the timeframes within which action must be taken.

2. Why is Preliminary Advice Important?

Building defect matters are highly time sensitive. Statutory warranty periods are strict, and missing a deadline can completely remove a scheme’s right to recover costs for defects.

Our preliminary advice helps ensure:

- You understand when statutory time limitations expire;
- You know which parties may be liable for building defects;



Preliminary advice is initial advice provided to owners corporations to help identify potential building defects, understand statutory warranty rights and clarify the options available for pursuing a claim.

- You receive early direction on how to preserve your scheme's rights; and
- You avoid unnecessary delays that can lead to costly disputes or lost claims.

By obtaining advice early, owners corporations can make informed decisions before defects escalate into complex legal battles.

3. Benefits of Obtaining Early Preliminary Advice

Early preliminary advice offers a range of practical and strategic advantages, including:

- Identifying precise expiry dates for statutory warranties to ensure steps are taken promptly to avoid missing critical deadlines.
- Clarification on whether defects are classified as major or minor.
- Assists in determining liability and provides a recommended course of action.
- Supports early resolution strategies to avoid lengthy and expensive litigation.
- Provides early visibility of potential costs and pathways.
- Improves the quality of evidence and strengthens your position in negotiations or proceedings.

- Identifying weaknesses or gaps in your case early.
- Allowing you to correct issues before they develop into larger, costly problems.

Overall, early preliminary advice transforms a potentially overwhelming situation into a clear, structured process which will save you time, reduce stress and maximise the chance of a successful outcome. This approach ensures your owners corporation is fully informed, prepared, and able to act quickly to preserve its position.

4. Information Required to Prepare Preliminary Advice

To assist us in preparing detailed, accurate advice, we require the following documents and information:

- Details of the builder and developer, including a copy of the building contract;
- Handover documents from the developer and/or builder;
- The strata plan;
- Certificates of completion;
- All interim and final occupation certificates, including relevant annexures;
- Any expert defect reports (or a list of defects with supporting photographs)

These documents will enable us to prepare a proper assessment of statutory timeframes, potential liability and warranty expiry dates, ensuring your rights are protected.

5. Next Steps

If you are experiencing building defects or require clarity around statutory timeframes, we can assist by providing preliminary advice for a fixed fee.

Please contact us to obtain a fixed price fee proposal and take the first step toward protecting your statutory rights.

***The information contained in this article is general information only and not legal advice. The currency, accuracy and completeness of this article (and its contents) should be checked by obtaining independent legal advice before you take any action or otherwise rely upon its contents in any way.



WHY PAINTING SHOULD BE PART OF YOUR SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY

When sustainability is raised in strata settings, painting rarely makes the shortlist. But when approached strategically, painting directly supports sustainability goals through improved energy performance, material longevity, reduced waste and safer indoor environments.

Strata managers are in a unique position to shift the perception of painting from a cosmetic upgrade to a sustainability decision. With the right planning, products and timing, it can be one of the simplest and most cost-effective ways to demonstrate environmental responsibility within a scheme.

1. Lower Energy Use Through Reflective Finishes

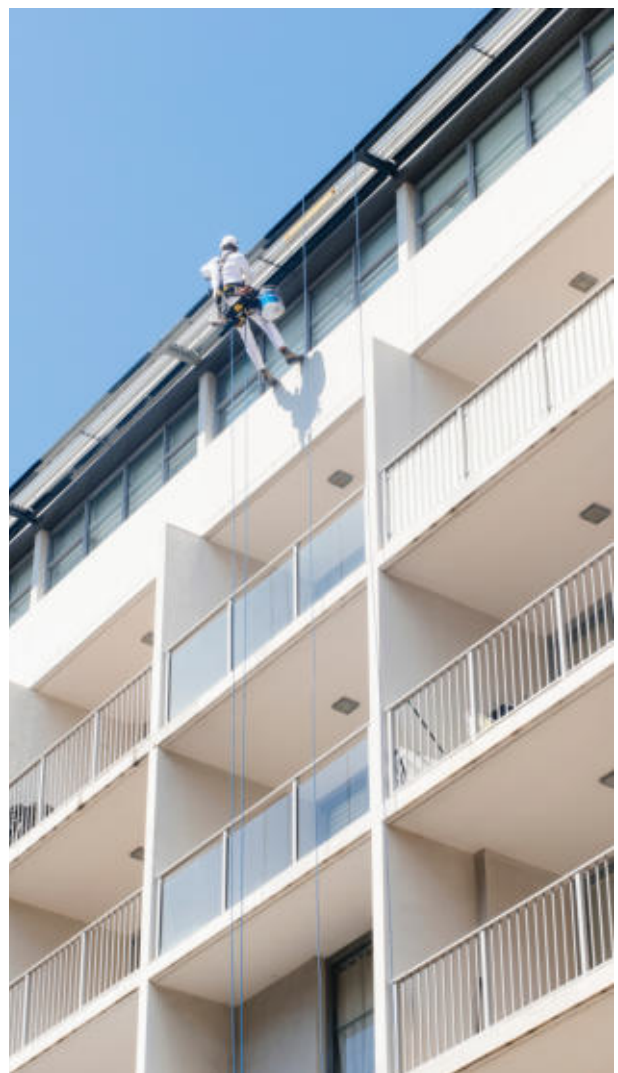
Paint selection can influence a building's thermal performance. Lighter colours reflect more sunlight than darker ones and heat-reflective coatings can reduce external wall and roof temperatures by up to 90 percent. This decreases cooling demand in warmer months and supports thermal comfort for residents and common spaces.

Reflective roof coatings in particular play a vital role in reducing heat gain. For strata buildings with large roof areas, this translates into a measurable impact on internal temperatures and energy consumption.

2. Preserve Materials and Reduce Waste

High-quality paint systems extend the life of key building materials such as render, concrete, timber and steel. When protected from moisture, UV and airborne pollutants, these materials degrade more slowly and require fewer replacements.

Delaying major repairs through proactive surface protection reduces the environmental and financial costs associated with material extraction, transport, disposal and replacement.



3. Optimise Maintenance and Limit Resource Use

Sustainable management also means using fewer resources over the life of the building. Scheduled repainting, timed according to product life cycles and environmental exposure, means less frequent use of materials, fewer site visits and reduced packaging waste.

Including painting in long-term capital works planning allows buildings to avoid rushed, reactive work that is often more disruptive and less efficient.

4. Improve Indoor Air Quality

Low-VOC (Volatile Organic Compound) paints support healthier indoor environments during and after application. These products emit fewer harmful chemicals and are now widely available for both external and internal common property areas.



Many systems also meet environmental certification standards, offering a transparent way to align painting work with your building's Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) goals.

Painting as a Sustainability Action

Painting is already a regular part of strata capital works planning. With a few informed choices, it can also become a meaningful part of your building's sustainability profile.

For committees aiming to address environmental performance in a practical, visible way, painting offers a high-impact, low-barrier opportunity to show leadership.

For support integrating painting into your sustainability or capital works strategy, contact Premier Painting today:

www.premierpainting.com.au



PREMIER PAINTING
COMPANY

LEADERS IN PAINTING SERVICES SINCE 1997

Height Access Painting for Strata Buildings

Safe. Compliant. Efficient.

- No scaffolding costs or delays
- Certified rope access team
- WHS compliant, licensed & insured
- Project Managers and Supervisors on every project
- Trusted by Strata, Government & Commercial sectors

**For your next strata painting project,
speak to the team at Premier Painting**

P 1300 91 62 91

E enquiry@premierpainting.com.au

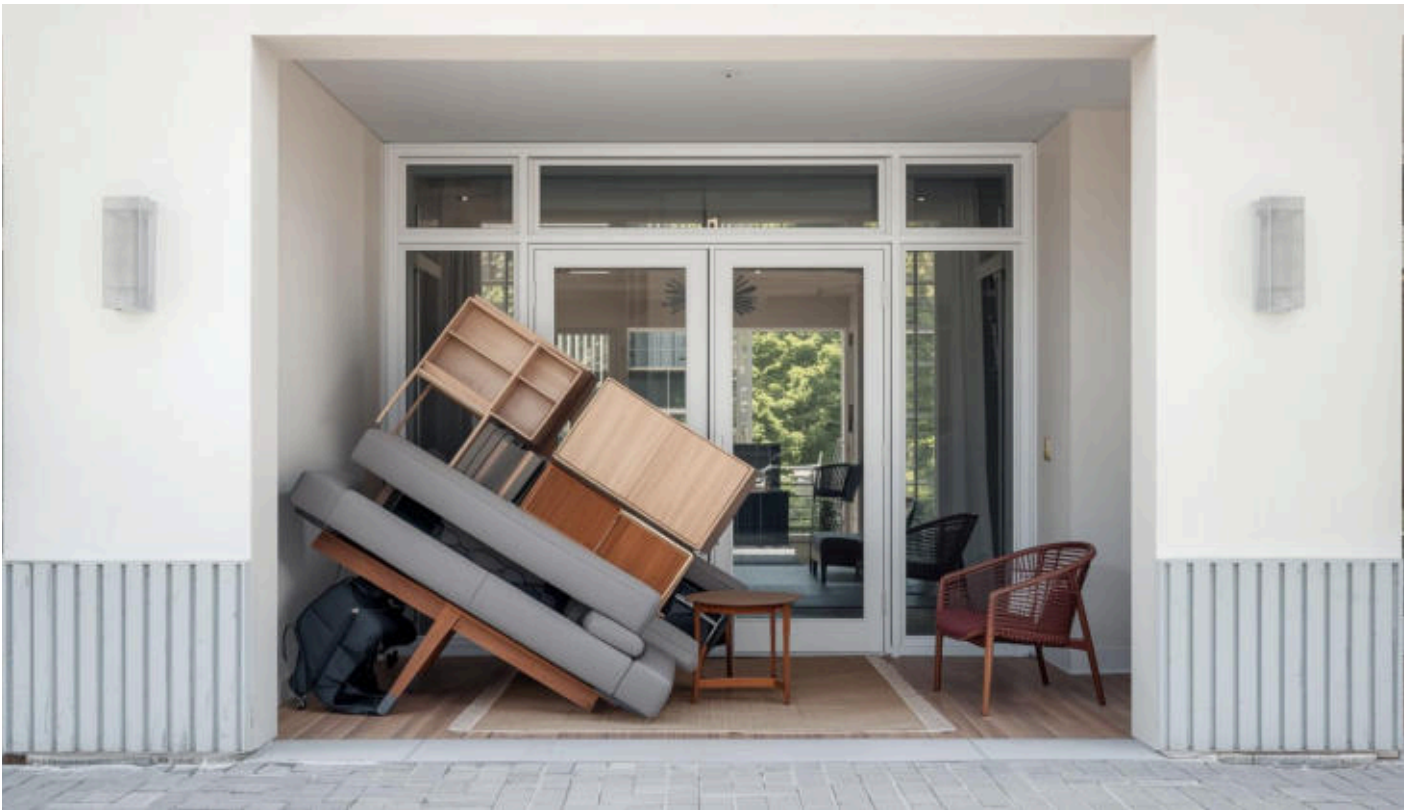
premierpainting.com.au



SCA (NSW) Taubmans Golf & Networking Day

8 May 2026
St Michael's Golf Course





ABANDONED GOODS IN STRATA: LEGAL OBLIGATIONS AND STEPS FOR COMPLIANCE

WRITTEN BY ANNA HAHM, PARTNER, AND HOLLY MACK,
LAWYER, GRACE LAWYERS



Owners Corporations (OCs) frequently encounter abandoned or uncollected goods left behind when an owner or occupier vacates a property. Goods are considered abandoned when the owner relinquishes possession without intending to return. These items can create logistical and legal challenges for the OC, which must follow strict processes to avoid liability.

The Uncollected Goods Act 1995 (NSW) (UGA) sets out the obligations for OCs when handling and disposing of abandoned goods. Except for perishable goods, plant matter or rubbish—which may be removed immediately—OCs must issue a disposal notice to the owner before taking action.

Notice Requirements Based on Value

Low-value goods (less than \$1,000):

OCs may give written or verbal notice providing at least 14 days for collection. If uncollected, the goods may then be disposed of appropriately.

Medium-value goods (\$1,000–\$20,000):

Written notice must be issued, allowing at least 28 days for collection. If goods remain uncollected, they must be sold via public auction or private sale for a reasonable market value.

High-value goods (over \$20,000):

OCs must obtain an order from the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal (NCAT) before disposing of or selling the goods, and must follow any directions issued.

Abandoned vehicles:

Before selling an abandoned vehicle, the OC must obtain important information from the NSW Police and searches from Personal Property Securities Register (PPSR).

Personal documents:

OCs must give written notice allowing 28 days for collection. If uncollected, documents must be securely destroyed or returned to their author.

Contents of a Disposal Notice

A valid disposal notice must include:

- the owner's name
- a detailed description of the goods
- the address for collection
- any storage or collection charges
- the deadline for collection
- the amount to be retained from sale proceeds to cover costs (if applicable)

Record-Keeping Obligations

Within seven days of disposal, the OC must prepare a detailed record of the items and;

Records must be kept for:

- **12 months** for low-value goods
- **6 years** for medium and high-value goods

Failure to maintain accurate records may lead to a \$550 fine (five penalty units).

Handling Sale Proceeds

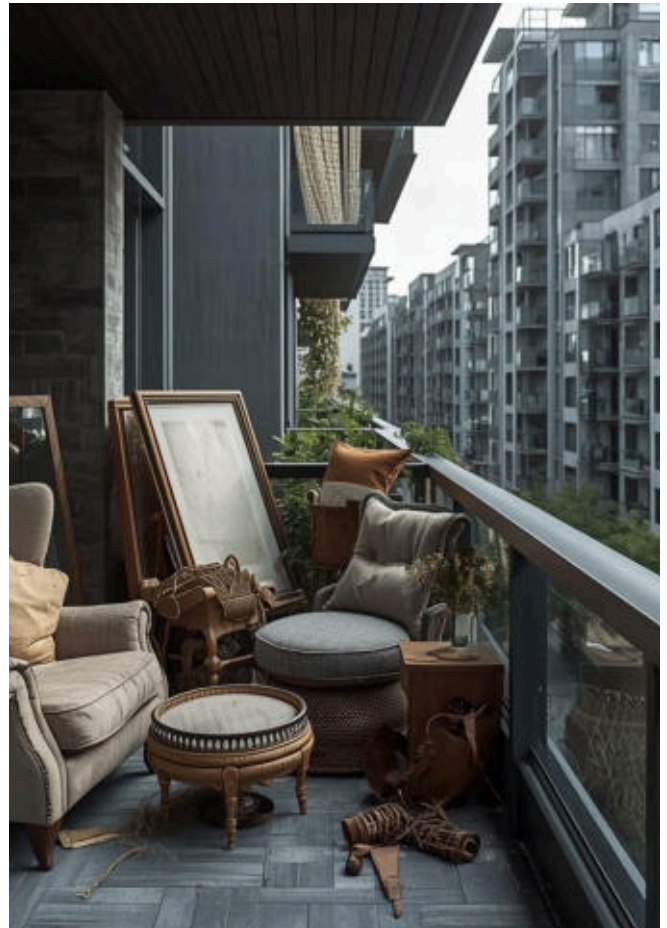
Sale proceeds must first be used to cover charges relating to storage, disposal, or sale. Any remaining balance must be transferred to Revenue NSW by October of the relevant tax year, in accordance with the *Unclaimed Money Act 1995 (NSW)*.

Summary

To avoid disputes or claims from lot owners who may later seek the return of their goods, OCs must strictly follow the requirements of the UGA. Adhering to proper notice procedures, disposal steps and record-keeping obligations helps ensure compliance and reduces legal risk.

If you require advice on compliant disposal of abandoned goods, call our Strata & Property team on 1300 144 436.

To learn more, visit www.gracelawyers.com.au



The Uncollected Goods Act 1995 (NSW) (UGA) sets out the obligations for OCs when handling and disposing of abandoned goods.

UNDERSTANDING THE COMPLAINT MANAGEMENT PROCESS AT SCA (NSW)

At SCA (NSW), the complaint management process is designed to build consumer confidence and fair handling of complaints.

This article outlines how individuals or organisations can raise a complaint against an SCA (NSW) member who has allegedly breached the SCA Code of Ethics and explains the steps involved once a complaint is received.

Who Can Initiate a Complaint against a Strata Manager or Firm?

The complaint management process is available to consumers, SCA (NSW) members, and organisations within the strata community, and can be initiated by:

- Individuals – Members or consumers with concerns.
- Organisations – Bodies that are part of the strata community.
- SCA Board – Complaints raised by the Board itself.
- PSMBAG – Professional Standards and Membership Advisory Group.

SCA (NSW) can only investigate matters that fall within its jurisdiction and involve alleged breaches of the SCA (NSW) Constitution, By-laws, or the SCA Code of Ethics.

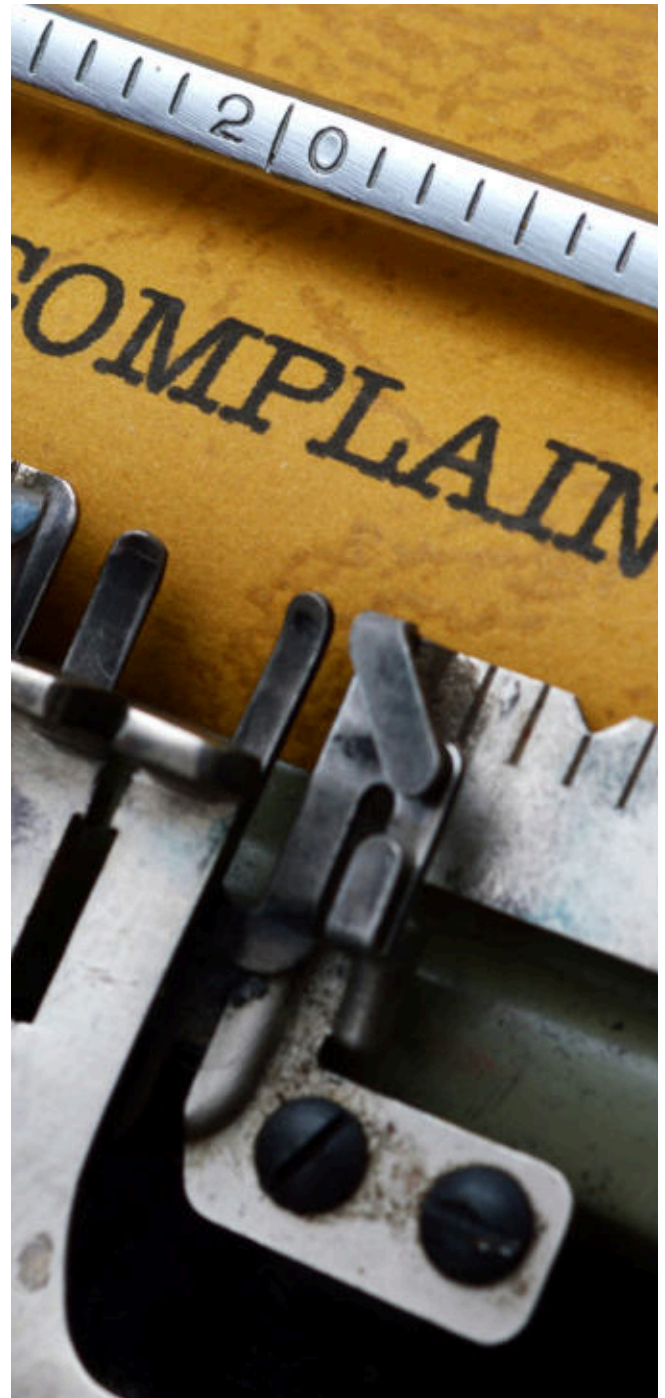
The complaints process cannot be used to obtain compensation, restitution, or other financial remedies. SCA (NSW) does not have the authority to order a member to make payments, provide services, or produce documents on behalf of a complainant.

Where appropriate, complainants may wish to seek advice from NSW Fair Trading or legal channels that have the authority to investigate statutory breaches or determine compensation.

How to Submit a Complaint against a Strata Manager or Firm

To start the complaint process, individuals must submit a completed [Complaint Application Form](#), which should include:

- A clear description of the alleged breach
- The parties involved in the complaint.
- Confirmation that reasonable steps have been taken to raise the issue with the Strata Management Agent and that the agency's internal complaints process has been followed.





Lodgement and Initial Assessment.

Once submitted, a senior executive will acknowledge receipt of the complaint within 7 days.

Once the complaint is lodged, the application will be reviewed. If the complaint is found to be insufficient, it will be dismissed. However, valid complaints will move forward for further review and the subject member will be given 14 days to respond.

The Investigation Process

SCA (NSW) aims to complete complaint investigations within approximately 60 days where sufficient information is available and the parties respond within the required timeframes.

During this period:

- Responses and evidence from both parties are collated and analysed.
- If the complaint lacks substance, it will be dismissed.
- If valid, it will be reviewed further and potentially tabled at the next PSMBAG meeting.

Review

The Professional Standards and Membership Board Advisory Group (PSMBAG) may review complaints where the investigation identifies that the matter has sufficient substance to proceed for determination.

The PSMBAG operates as an independent review panel composed of experienced strata professionals from other states, ensuring that complaints are assessed impartially and without any direct involvement in the matter under review.

The panel carefully examines the evidence before determining the appropriate outcome. Possible outcomes may include:

- Dismissal or Further Investigation – The complaint may be dismissed if found to be unsubstantiated, or it may be investigated further.
- Reminder or Warning – The member may be issued a reminder or warning if the complaint is minor.
- Mandatory Training – The member may be required to undertake specific training.
- Suspension or Expulsion – In more severe cases, suspension or expulsion may be recommended.

All parties involved are notified of the outcome.

Appealing a Decision

If a party disagrees with the outcome of a complaint, they have the right to appeal. The appeal must be lodged within 28 days, and possible outcomes include:

- Dismissal of Appeal – If the appeal lacks merit, it may be dismissed.
- Upholding the Appeal – The complaint may be remitted back to PSMBAG with directions for reconsideration.
- Substitute Determination – The appeal may result in a new decision.

The reasons for the decision will be clearly communicated to all involved parties.

Confidentiality

All complaint files are securely stored and all involved parties are expected to handle the information with discretion. The SCA Board and Chapter Boards are involved in overseeing the process, but strict confidentiality is maintained at all times.

Looking to raise a complaint or understand more of the process? head to scansw.com.au/professionalism/complaint-form

STRATA COMMUNITY & LIVING

AUTUMN 2026



strata
community
association®
NSW



All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means now known or to be invented, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording or by any information or retrieval system without written permission from the author or publisher, except for the brief inclusion of quotations in a review.

DISCLAIMER: Please note the information enclosed is general in nature and cannot be relied upon as legal advice. Strata Community Association (NSW) Ltd and its members disclaims any liability (including for negligence) to any person in respect of: anything; and the consequences of anything, done, or not done, by any such person in whole or partial reliance upon the whole or part of the information enclosed. Strata & Community Living is a joint initiative brought to you by SCA (NSW); the peak industry body representing strata managing agents and others committed to the continual improvement in standards of strata management practice in NSW and your strata managing agent.

EDITORIAL CONTACT: SCA (NSW) Ltd W: nsw.strata.community | P: 02 9492 8200 | E: enquiries@strata.community

All members of our Strata Manager Chapter are 'PROFESSIONAL Strata Managers'. SCA (NSW) strives to ensure that all strata manager members are able to deliver services to the public that are of the highest professional and ethical standard.