

STRATA NEWS

JANUARY- APRIL 2025 | ISSUE 5

KICKING OFF 2025

Hello there!

It's been a couple of months, but we've well and truly kicked off 2025 and WOW! what a start to the year it's been.

If we haven't already spoken, we'd like to formally welcome all of our clients to 2025. We are so excited for this year and are so grateful to have you on this journey with us.

Here's the first newsletter for 2025, which takes us all the way through to the end of April. We hope you find the information within this edition helpful.

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REGULATION MODULE SPOTLIGHT - SMALL SCHEMES

Last edition we touched on the different regulation modules within the BCCMA, but in this edition we've given some key details about the Small Schemes Module. The Small Schemes module operates a little bit differently to the Standard and Accommodation Modules, and a few key points to note are:

- The only positions on the committee are Secretary and Treasurer
- One person can hold both positions or 2 people can hold one position each
- Motions can be decided outside of a general meeting if a vote is cast for each lot by a person entitled to vote at a general meeting
- Only applies to schemes 6 lots or less
- You can find your regulation module within your Community Management Statement (CMS)



COMPLIANCE FOCUS - SWITCHBOARD INSPECTIONS

Did you know that you should have your common property switchboard inspected every 2 years?

Switchboard inspections are crucial for electrical safety and are carried out by qualified electricians. Throughout the inspection, the electrician will identify potential hazards like wear, damage or corrosion and provide advice on what needs to be done to rectify these issues.

You'll most commonly see an agenda item at committee meetings or your annual general meeting for switchboard inspections, usually starting from around \$300.

Neglecting regular switchboard maintenance may lead to severe consequences like failures and fire risks and ageing switchboards may be subject to regular faults leading to costly replacements if not identified early on.

When it comes to compliance in switchboard inspections or any electrical safety standards, it is essential to understand that compromise should not be an option. It's a small price to pay for peace of mind. Perhaps think of it as an investment in long-term safety rather than just a cost.



Switchboard after a fire. Source: Ocean Realty

BY-LAWS: WHAT ARE THEY AND WHO NEEDS TO ABIDE BY THEM?

What are by-laws? Well, put simply, by-laws are a set of rules that apply to all occupants at a scheme. By-laws differ from scheme to scheme. The by-laws are registered with your Community Management Statement (CMS) and also form part of tenancy agreements.

Everyone within a community titles scheme must abide by the by-laws. That includes tenants, visitors and owners. Failure to comply with the by-laws can have consequences.

The committee are usually the ones that enforce the by-laws, but if you see something that shouldn't be happening or is clearly a contravention of the by-laws, you can let your body corporate manager know so that they can follow up with the committee.

Not all by-laws are legally enforceable and it's not uncommon to see by-laws included that have just been written 'just because' rather than having any benefit to the body corporate.

The usual contravention process is:

- Contact the owner / tenant (or both) to discuss informally (not always possible if the owner or tenant isn't approachable)
- Issue a contravention notice (form 10 or form 11)
- Commence legal action (either conciliation or commence proceedings in the Magistrates Court)

Recently, we've had a number of issues in relation to maintenance of EU areas and parking on common property. Brushing up on those rules might just avoid future problems!

CALLING OUT MISCONDUCT AND WHERE TO REPORT IT

Community living can be hard. There's different personalities, and different levels of participation but when something is amiss, you should call it out.

Sometimes, we find ourselves working with people who want to do what they think is best for the scheme, but decisions don't comply with legislation - potentially landing your body corporate in hot water. We love our passionate and eager owners, but body corporate when you think about it, is it's own little world with its own rules.

It's widely known that there's not a lot of information passed onto new buyers and we are trying to close that gap by providing education and support to our clients (unfortunately we can't change the world overnight), but this highlights the importance of doing your own searches and understanding what you're stepping into.

Decisions in the past don't set a precedent for future decision making. A committee or body corporate is still obligated to comply with legislation and act in the best interests of all owners, whether you agree with it or not.

Trust us when we say, all it takes is one new owner to move into the complex to shake things up, the consequences for misconduct can have serious impacts on the way you run your scheme. If you see something you either think or know shouldn't be happening, you can:

- Try self-resolution
- Apply for conciliation (once you've attempted self-resolution)
- Apply for adjudication for body corporate disputes

PS - if you're unsure, ask a question. It's better to get the right information than to take a wild guess. We're here to help.

Hot tip: your by-laws may assist in further understanding what's required of you in your scheme.



REFERRAL PARTNER SPOTLIGHT

Ocean Realty

Ocean Body Corporate Advisors is incredibly excited to be partnering with Ocean Realty. Founded on a long history in the local area, the Ocean Realty team prides themselves on their understanding of the value living in Brisbane's Bayside and the unique lifestyle opportunities on offer to residents.

If you're thinking of selling or putting your property up for rent, contact the team today to find out about our exclusive deals.

Sales - hello@oceanrealty.com.au

Property Management - rentals@oceanrealty.com.au

ROLE OF THE STRATA MANAGER

We're frequently asked "what do you actually do" and it's a tough question to answer and "lots of things" isn't really the answer people are seeking.

Body Corporate Managers are frequently confused with property managers or caretakers, and we're neither of those things BUT we do share some characteristics.

The role of the Strata Manager is simple (in theory) and that is to supply administrative services to the body corporate. But what does that mean?

In a very basic sense, your strata manager will:

- liaise with the committee to arrange meetings
- draft meeting notices and minutes and distribute these accordingly
- arrange maintenance on instruction from the committee
- manage bank accounts
- send levies & follow up arrears
- draft budgets
- provide education and support
- chair meetings upon request

Our role is to act in the best interests of the body corporate and to act honestly, fairly and professionally. It is not our job to make decisions for you (that's a different arrangement altogether) but our job is to support you in making decisions that comply with the legislation.



HOT CROSS BUNS

Here's what you'll need:

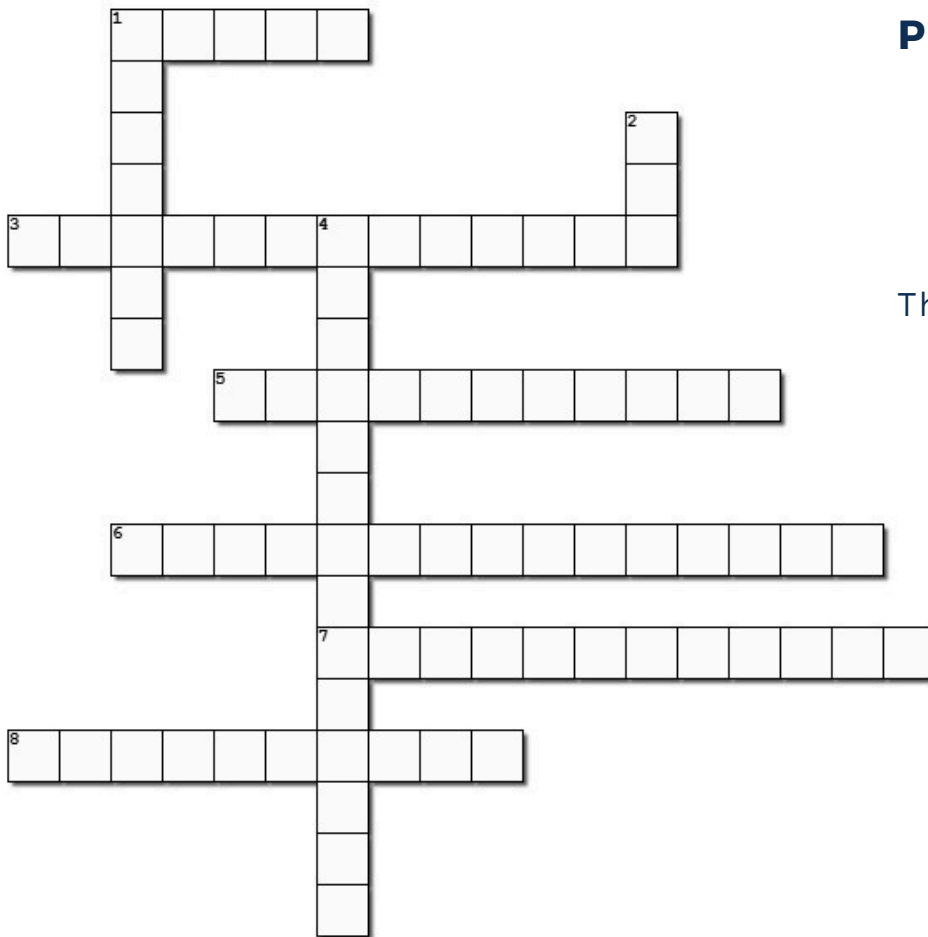
- 3 tsp instant yeast
- ½ cup caster sugar
- 1 ½ cups milk (warmed)
- 4 ¼ cups bread flour
- 2 tsp cinnamon powder
- 2 tsp all spice
- ½ tsp salt
- 1 ½ cups sultanas (or none)
- 1 - 2 oranges, zest only
- 3.5 tbs unsalted butter, melted
- 1 egg at room temperature

Method:

1. Mix dry ingredients in a large bowl
2. Add butter, milk, egg, sultanas and zest
3. Mix for 5 minutes until a smooth elastic dough forms. Start on speed 2 then increase to speed 4 once mixed. After 1 minute, add extra flour if required.
4. Cover bowl with cling wrap and place in a warm, wind free place to rise until doubled in size
5. Remove cling wrap and punch dough to deflate.
6. Roll out dough on floured surface, shape into a log and cut into 12 equal pieces
7. Roll each piece into a ball and place on a piece of oiled (spray) cling wrap and leave for 30-45 minutes
8. Mix flour and water until a thick runny paste forms
9. Remove the cling wrap and pipe crosses onto the buns
10. Bake in a pre-heated oven at 180 degrees for 22 minutes or until the surface is a deep golden brown.

OCEAN BCA CROSSWORD

IMPORTANT DATES & UPCOMING PUBLIC HOLIDAYS



18 APRIL

Good Friday

19 APRIL

The day after Good Friday

20 APRIL

Easter Sunday

21 APRIL

Easter Monday

25 APRIL

Anzac Day

5 MAY

Labour Day

Across

1. Body corporate act (acronym)
3. Regulation module type
5. The person responsible for chairing meetings
6. What to try before taking legal action
7. The step after conciliation
8. Starts with C, there's no compromise

Down

1. Set of rules specific to your scheme
2. Acronym for community title scheme
4. Supplies administrative services to the body corporate

CONTACT US

Email: info@oceanbca.com.au

Phone: (07) 3063 0646

[BOOK AN APPOINTMENT HERE](#)



Special Offer

Refer Ocean Body Corporate Advisors to your friends and family and on successful appointment and handover of the building, you'll receive a

\$100 VISA Giftcard

as our way of saying thank you.



Don't forget to leave a review!

Your feedback is important to us and we'd love to hear from you.

Please click [here](#) to leave a review!

Please note that reviews may be published to our website and social media channels. If you have left a review and prefer your review not to be published, please let us know by simply sending us an email.

If you have any other feedback, please let us know via email so that a member of our team can get in touch with you directly.