THE STRATA™ PROFESSIONALS

Strata Management, Professionalised.

Remediation, Renovation and Retrofitting

The Body Corporate Committee's Guide to Major Works

19 August 2026

The Life and Times of a Body Corporate Building

Buildings age like us — and need more time and money spent on them as they get older

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Conception	**Birth**	**Infancy**	**Growing Up**	**Middle Age**	**Senior Years**	**Death**
(Developer era)	*(Handover)*	*(Settling In)*	*(Steady State)*	*(Midlife)*	*(Major Works Era)*	*(Renewal)*
Developer-imposed management rights and embedded networks	Defects liability period begins; statutory warranties running	First AGM; defect assessment motion; unsteady relationships	Routine maintenance; sinking fund contributions build	Roofs, membranes and services age; forecast reviewed	Remediation, renovation and retrofit decisions	Full-scale renewal or scheme termination considered

Every stage carries its own legal duties and its own decisions — that's the shape of the rest of this session.

The Duty That Makes Body Corporates Different

Common property isn't optional — and neither is maintaining it

A standalone house

- Your roof, your problem
- Your choice, your timeline
- No one else's vote required
- Neglect it — you carry the risk alone

A body corporate scheme

✓ Common property is owned collectively

✓ The body corporate MUST maintain it — not discretionary

✓ Structural elements must be kept structurally sound

✓ No individual owner can opt out

What owners still maintain themselves

Fixtures installed for an occupier's own benefit, and single-lot utility infrastructure on common property — hot water systems, split-system air-conditioning, solar panels servicing one lot — remain the owner's responsibility even though they sit on shared land.

The Three R's of Major Works

The law doesn't stop major works — it controls the pace, three different ways

R — Remediation

Repairs, including defects

- Reg 180: the BC must maintain common property, structurally sound where structural
- Developer / builder defects: statutory warranties (ss 220–224) plus QBCC warranty period — commonly ~6.5 years
- Defect assessment motion mandatory at the first post-handover AGM
- Funded via committee or general meeting spending limits once liability is established

R — Renovation

Improvements by lot owners

- Minor — $3,000 or less, no impact on appearance: BC may simply authorise
- Over $3,000, or affects appearance: ordinary resolution
- Needs exclusive use rights over common property: resolution without dissent plus a by-law
- Conditions can attach: work hours, protection of common property, contractor licensing

R — Retrofitting

BC improvements, including sustainability infrastructure

- Up to $300 × lots: committee approval
- Up to $2,000 × lots (once / yr): ordinary resolution; above that: special resolution
- Solar: *Building Act 1975* override — can't refuse on looks alone
- EV charging: no override like solar — BC may refuse or set conditions for genuine electrical, safety or insurance reasons

A single project can't be split into smaller pieces to dodge a higher threshold.
Defect claims run against strict statutory warranty periods — act early.

Picking the Right Contractors

Avoiding the conflicts that come from being ‘in the club’

What ‘the club’ looks like

- ✗ A small, familiar circle of consultants, contractors and managers who keep recommending each other
- ✗ Referral fees or commissions that are never disclosed to the committee
- ✗ A remedial report that happens to describe a scope only one contractor can deliver
- ✗ The same names re-engaged year after year, never tested against the open market
- ✗ Committees approving recommendations without asking who actually benefits

How to break it

- ✓ Separate the report-writer from the fixer — an independent consultant shouldn't quote on their own scope
- ✓ Require written disclosure of any commercial relationship before a recommendation is put to the vote
- ✓ Get a genuine second opinion on any major remedial scope, especially where fees run high relative to the works
- ✓ Run a real, competitive tender for significant contracts — not a one-name formality
- ✓ Ask the simple question out loud: who benefits if this recommendation is accepted?

Win the Room

Town halls work because they're sense-making, not information transfer — held before positions lock in

1

Rational apathy

One vote feels inconsequential — a room raises the perceived stake

2

Diffusion of responsibility

'Someone else will sort it' breaks down face to face

3

Status quo bias

Change feels risky by default — reframe the cost of doing nothing

4

Anchoring

The first credible number heard sets the frame — be first

5

Voice effect

People accept outcomes better when they feel genuinely heard

6

Pre-decision processing

Time to think before a fixed motion improves the eventual vote

7

Social proof

Visible support from respected owners shifts the undecided

8

Messenger effect

Who delivers the message matters as much as the message itself

Timing is the mechanism: hold the town hall weeks before formal notice, while positions are still open.

Fund the Fix

Savings, special levies or body corporate loans — and why the runway matters more than the method

	Sinking fund	Special levy	Body corporate loan
Lead time	Years — plan ahead	Weeks to months	Weeks to months
Cost to owners	Small, steady contributions	One-off, can be significant	Smoothed via levy over loan term
Interest	None	None	Yes — compare lenders
Best for	Known, forecastable works	Defined, quoted one-off works	Urgent or large-scale works

The single biggest lever: communicate years ahead.

A forecast shared early, revisited often, turns a shock levy into an expected one — whichever funding path the committee ends up choosing.

THE STRATA™ PROFESSIONALS