



## CITY FUTURES RESEARCH CENTRE

# JOINING THE STRATA COMMITTEE OR SUB-COMMITTEE

### JOINING THE STRATA COMMITTEE

The strata committee is made up of elected representatives of the owners corporation. The committee has decision-making and day-to-day managerial functions, such as organising repairs that need to be done in the building, managing strata funds, making minor decisions on behalf of the owners corporation, and facilitating meetings to enable voting among all owners on major decisions.

### WHO MAKES UP THE STRATA COMMITTEE?

The strata committee is made up of 1-9 members, with schemes of over 100 lots requiring at least 3 members. Any owner can nominate themselves for election to the strata committee, although there are [eligibility requirements](#). Of these strata committee members, there are three office-bearing positions: chairperson, secretary and treasurer.

#### Chairperson

The chairperson is responsible for chairing strata committee meetings. They must preside over the meetings if they are in attendance, and decide on issues relating to voting and meeting procedure.

#### Treasurer

The treasurer handles the finances of the strata committee. This role includes:

- Giving receipts and notice of levies
- Keeping accounting records and financial statements

#### Secretary

The secretary holds the administrative role, [which includes](#):

- Preparing minutes
- Giving notices on behalf of the owners corporation and answering correspondence addressed to the owners corporation
- Keeping the strata roll
- Convening meetings of the owners corporation and strata committee

Owners that are considering nominating themselves for these positions should consider which role(s) might [best suit their skillset](#). Alternatively, a strata managing agent or building manager can be delegated to carry out some, or all, of the responsibilities of the strata committee.

# HOW TO GET INVOLVED IN THE STRATA COMMITTEE

Joining your strata committee is an important means to contribute towards improving your building or scheme and can be a rewarding experience. By joining your committee, you will come to understand the scheme's decision-making processes, help enact changes in the building and can proactively enhance the living environment and value of the shared property.

To get involved in the strata committee for your scheme, you will need to be nominated at the annual general meeting (AGM). Here are the steps to being nominated:

## Step 1 – Consider your nomination into the strata committee

Try to anticipate reasons why members of the owners corporation might be hesitant to have you on the committee (e.g. inexperienced, new to the building, potential conflicts of interest). Also consider all the reasons [why you would be beneficial](#) as a member of the committee.

## Step 2 – Get to know people in your scheme

In order to be elected, it is best to [get to know other owners](#) in your scheme well before the scheduled AGM. If the other owners know you to be an approachable and trustworthy person, you are much more likely to be elected onto the strata committee.

## Step 3 – Come prepared to the AGM

You will need to have another owner or member of the owners corporation second your nomination into election of the strata committee. It is best to establish this support before the meeting, so that your nomination is assured to go to the election. Also go over the reasons why members of the owners corporation might be hesitant to have you on the committee and address these at the meeting while stating the benefits of your inclusion.

## Step 4 – At the AGM

Nominations will be tabled at the AGM prior to voting. If your nomination is seconded, you will be included in the vote. A vote will then be cast on the number of strata committee members, and who will fill the roles.

## Step 5 – Electing office-bearing roles

The last step is to elect the chairperson, treasurer and secretary of the strata committee. These roles are determined only by the elected strata committee, not by the owners corporation. Generally, a meeting of the new strata committee will be scheduled to be held immediately after the AGM to allow this to happen. Any strata committee member can take on one or more of the office-bearing roles. Alternatively, a strata manager may be delegated some or all of these roles.

If you would like to be considered for one of the office-bearing roles, you should state your case for nomination at the next organized strata committee meeting. You should consider which roles are most appropriate for you to take on. The process is much the same as the process for electing the strata committee members.

## IMPORTANT:

### If you are elected:

You will become a member of the strata committee and you can nominate yourself for an office-bearing role.

### If you aren't elected:

You can try again at the next AGM, and; you can still be proactive in voting and decision-making via the owners corporation, and take on various other informal roles, like joining a sub-committee.



## WHAT TO CONSIDER

Depending on the nature of the scheme and your personal circumstances, joining the strata committee can be a major decision. [There are a few things you should consider](#) before deciding to get involved.

### Does your scheme have a strata managing agent?

Strata schemes with managing agents are much easier for strata committees to manage. While some schemes opt for self-management, this option will require more procedural and legislative knowledge on behalf of the members of the strata committee, and requires more time, responsibility and effort.

### Do you handle disagreement and confrontation well?

Discussion about levies, defects, changes to the building and various other agenda items can cause heated disagreements as people discuss the future of their homes and sometimes significant investments. Strata committee members can even receive verbal and physical abuse in particularly hostile schemes. In many instances, you will not be able to please all owners. Whether you could handle conflicting interests and potentially uncomfortable situations is an important consideration before getting involved.

### Can you commit to regular meetings and other time commitments?

Joining the strata committee can be a time-consuming commitment. Depending on the level of organization in the strata committee, meetings can run overtime and outside of the strata committee meetings, maintenance and enacting actionable items can require more time than originally estimated.

### Will you be paid for your role in the strata committee?

The owners corporation can pay strata committee members. Paid strata committee members are generally considered where the duties are substantial, and similar to duties that might otherwise have been performed by a strata manager. In practice, payments tend to be a token amount to cover your expenses. If you think that the duties you are likely to perform as part of the strata committee are a substantial time commitment, check whether the role is paid, and if not consider putting forward an agenda item regarding payment at the annual general meeting.

### What are your reasons for wanting to join the strata committee?

Becoming a member of the strata committee means that you are acting as a representative of the owners corporation, and not joining for [personal gain](#). Strata committee members have a duty to act for the benefit of the owners corporation and to act with due care and diligence. The members of the strata committee should have a common goal to improve the management and maintenance of the scheme, thereby benefitting all owners. Consider whether you have any conflicts of interest to disclose before you nominate yourself as a strata committee member.

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## STRATA SUB-COMMITTEES

If you do not wish to be on the strata committee, but would nevertheless like to be involved, you could consider joining or starting a sub-committee. Sub-committees can be formed by people that show interest in a specific issue, such as a defect rectification project, landscaping, sustainability, safety or social events.

A sub-committee is less formal than the strata committee and is not specifically recognised in strata legislation. Unlike the strata committee, a sub-committee does not have a decision-making role or any legal powers to act on behalf of the owners corporation. However, sub-committees can still play an advisory role, gathering information and data, chasing specialist advice and after approval is granted by either the strata committee or the owners corporation organising the work on behalf of the owners corporation.

### Starting a sub-committee

A sub-committee can be formed by the owners corporation, and can include residents and owners. However, it is advisable to have one strata committee member in the sub-committee(s) to provide feedback and disseminate information at strata committee meetings or annual general meetings where necessary. Sub-committees provide a means to bring enthusiastic residents and owners together on a specific issue, and to ease the burden of strata committees in managing numerous issues.

If you are interested in creating a sub-committee, first establish with the strata committee which sub-committees are already established and what assistance they may need. You should decide whether the sub-committee will be an ongoing group, or tasked with a short-term project. If there is a potential need to create a sub-committee for the specific area you are interested in, [contact](#)

[other owners or residents](#) to scope out who else might be interested in joining. Provide the owners with an explanation of how sub-committees work, and what might be involved. The Owners Corporation Network provides a sample [Statement of Purpose](#) that can be drafted to provide to the strata committee and other owners with more information about the nature of the sub-committee.

### Joining a sub-committee

If your strata scheme already has sub-committees, consider which committee(s) you would like to join. Ask for information about the sub-committees directly or through the strata committee. If the sub-committee has a [Statement of Purpose](#), ask to view it to get an idea of the responsibilities and possible commitment to joining the group. Ask current members of the sub-committee what work is involved, and where you might be able to help. Consider what skills or benefit you can bring to the group. Also consider your current commitments, and how much time you can dedicate to the sub-committee.

Some sub-committees might have a capped number of members and have already filled all their positions. If this is the case, the sub-committee will have a review period specified in their statement of purpose, and you might be able to join the sub-committee after the review. If the sub-committee is only temporary, you might be able to help informally.

Remember, if you are on a sub-committee, your role is to assist the strata committee and the owners corporation. A sub-committee can present recommendations to the strata committee or the owners corporation but cannot make decisions on behalf of the owners corporation. Sub-committee members who are not also strata committee members are **very unlikely** to be covered by any office bearers insurance that the owners corporation may have.

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

- [Sub-Committees – Strata Community Australia](#)
- [A Guide to Serving on a Strata Committee – Netstrata](#)
- [The Strata Committee in a Strata Scheme – Strataman](#)
- [Strata Committee – NSW Fair Trading](#)
- [Executive Committees and How They Should Function – Owners Corporation Network](#)
- [Working parties or sub-committees – Owners Corporation Network](#)

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Strata Community Association (NSW) is the peak industry body for Strata and Community Title Management in New South Wales. Membership includes strata managers, support staff, committee members and suppliers of products and services to the industry. SCA (NSW) has in excess of 3,000 members who represent over 75% of strata lots in NSW by way of helping to oversee, advise or manage a combined property portfolio with an estimated replacement value of over \$400 Billion. SCA (NSW) proudly fulfils the dual roles of a professional institute and consumer advocate. Contact: (02) 9492 8200 | [enquiries.nsw@strata.community](mailto:enquiries.nsw@strata.community) | <https://nsw.strata.community/>