



ACACIA GARDENS NEWSLETTER

Brought to you by your Strata Committee
July 2021

Dear Owners and Residents,

We hope you are all staying safe and looking after yourselves during this difficult time. Welcome to the mid-year edition of the Acacia Gardens strata committee newsletter. We have a lot of information to share with you from the last few months.

LATEST NEWS

Your committee continue to hold regular informal meetings to keep things moving along. A lot of progress has been made over the first half of this year.

Electronic Communications

If you have not already done so, please assist us with reducing the cost of notice mail outs by downloading **THIS FORM** and registering your email with our strata manager, BCS. You can complete the form in PDF and sign it electronically. Please return it by email to BCS at: stratamanager@acaciagardens.com.au.

Masks & COVID restrictions

Given that we are dealing with the highly contagious strain of COVID-19 this time around, the government has now mandated that all residents wear a mask in all common areas. Please also observe the request to only have 2 people in the lift at any time.

If you have any questions about the COVID requirements for Strata & Community schemes, you can read about it on the Fair Trading website [HERE](#).

Noise complaints

Please help keep Acacia Gardens a pleasant and peaceful place to live for all residents by respecting our neighbours and keeping noise to a minimum.

With us all stuck at home more than usual, some residents have asked what to do about noise complaints and noisy neighbours. Noise complaints should be directed to the relevant building manager during normal hours, and to Security after hours. For serious noise complaints, you should contact the local police. If you put your complaint in writing to the building manager, please copy us in (stratacommittee@acaciagardens.com.au) so that we can track it at a committee level as well.

BCS Update

Our Strata Manager of many years, Kara Seymour, has moved on to another job. Our new strata manager is Samantha Edwards. Samantha comes to us with a wealth of experience both in Strata Management and she is also a qualified lawyer with Strata law experience. The committee are working closely with Sam on all issues.

Building Works

The painting and remedial façade work for the Stage 1 towers commenced on 17 May 2021 and is planned to last for about 4 months. As part of this project, the render is being repaired and expansion joints are being replaced (where necessary). This will resolve some waterproofing issues that apartments have been suffering for many years. This necessary work is also an investment in our building which is long overdue and will protect stage 1 for many years to come.

The OC has engaged a project manager, Paint Assist, to manage this work. Four companies tendered for the remedial works with a large variance in costs. The OC entered into a contract with EasyTrades to complete the work after a thorough selection process. Easy Trades was the most competitive tender both in terms of cost and start date. Sam is the site manager for EasyTrades and can be contacted on 0466 773 555 should you have any questions.

The project is progressing well, and the Jones Street side of the building is already half completed.

We have notified our insurance broker that this work has commenced which should have a positive impact when we renew our insurance premium.

The EasyTrades contract is fixed at \$798,800. This compares very favourably with some quotes which came in at more than double this price.

The payment for this work will come from the loan which was approved at the last AGM, The SC is seeking advice for the best options for repayment of this loan over the coming years.

Cladding

As you might know, Acacia Gardens has a small amount of flammable cladding (less than 1% of the total façade) that needs to be removed and replaced.

The OC has engaged Andis Consulting to project manage this piece of work. Four companies tendered for the cladding work with a large variance in costs. The OC entered into a contract with EasyTrades to complete the work after a thorough selection process. EasyTrades were able to offer the most competitive pricing given that they are already set up on site and ready to do the work. Scaffolding will be necessary for the removal and replacement of the cladding. The actual work (which is subject to approval from Sydney City Council) is due to commence in July.

Sydney City Council has been heavily involved in the planning for this project. The OC has engaged both a fire engineer and a structural engineer to assist with this work.

Once the cladding has been removed our insurance premiums should reduce significantly (up to \$80,000) which is good for all owners.

The EasyTrades contract is \$353,540.

Waterproofing

The Committee inherited a significant number of waterproofing issues throughout the building. These issues have been known for many years with only temporary solutions put in place.

If you live in one of these water-affected units, please know that we are working through all of these jobs as a priority.

A number of units now have permanent solutions in place, and we are working through the remaining units. At the time of publishing this newsletter, the roof between tower E and tower 4 has been ground back to bare concrete for a new waterproofing membrane to be installed. We do apologise for the noise this has caused.

The façade remedial works and painting that is happening in Stage 1 will also improve some of the waterproofing issues.

Elevators – Stage 1 and Stage 2

In the past 12 months, there has been an increase in the number of complaints relating to elevators (especially in Stage 2).

We have engaged with OTIS (our elevator contractor) and understand that some of the problems with the elevators may be unable to be overcome (due to age and unavailability of parts).

OTIS has recommended that the OC put together a replacement schedule for all lifts in the building. The Committee has agreed to engage an expert (independent from OTIS) to come and look at the lifts and prepare a schedule of lifts that need to be replaced and costing.

This is a priority for the committee, but it will have significant cost consequences. OTIS has indicated that the cost of replacing one lift is in the vicinity of \$300,000. The building has 12 elevators.

LED Lighting upgrade

The lighting upgrade in the car park has been completed. Some tweaking will take place in the coming weeks to leave all lights in the driveways and walkways turned on permanently, albeit at a reduced brightness.

The fire stairs are currently being upgraded and changed to LEDs.

Stage 1 Gardens

CSR, as the caretaker for Stage 1, is responsible (pursuant to their contract) to maintain the gardens of Stage 1. CSR has refused to comply with their contract which led to the gardens falling into a terrible state.

The Committee resolved to maintain (and pay for) the gardening for Stage 1 so that owners can enjoy the gardens. CSR is refusing to pay for the cost of the gardening so the OC (all owners) are stuck having to pay for the gardening until CSR's legal proceedings against the OC are heard in the Supreme Court.

You may also see some of our residents doing volunteer garden work around the grounds to restore the stage 1 gardens and clear the overgrowth for painting. Another highlight is the planting of 2 Crepe Myrtles in the north facing bed which will flower pink in the summer. If you see the team in the garden and want to help out, then please join in. They are even happy just to talk about what they are doing.

Legal Proceedings commenced by SunAust Properties (Central Sydney Realty) against the OC

SunAust (CSR) commenced legal proceedings in the NSW Supreme Court against all owners (the OC). SunAust seeks to recover monies that it says is owed to it by the OC. The amount sought is disputed. The OC has engaged a solicitor and a barrister to defend the claim. The OC is next in court for a directions hearing on 10 September 2021.

The background to this dispute is that previous strata committees identified that SunAust (CSR) had been overcharging the OC for many years and told SunAust (CSR) that either it: 1) provide evidence that the OC had agreed to the additional fees; or 2) provide invoices for the contractually agreed amount. Until such time as SunAust (CSR) did either of those things, the previous committee agreed to stop paying any invoices submitted by SunAust (CSR). To date, SunAust (CSR) has been unable or unwilling to do either. Instead, SunAust (CSR) commenced legal proceedings against all owners (the OC).

NCAT Application to terminate SunAust Properties (Central Sydney Realty)'s caretaking agreement

At the last AGM, the OC determined to seek legal advice and do all things necessary (including commencing proceedings against SunAust (CSR) in NCAT) to terminate SunAust (CSR)'s caretaking agreement.

Since the AGM, the Committee sought legal advice and commenced proceedings in NCAT to terminate SunAust (CSR)'s caretaking agreement. The OC has engaged a solicitor and a barrister to represent it at NCAT. This matter is listed for hearing in NCAT on 17 November 2021 for a three-day hearing.

If any owner has any evidence that they would like to provide to assist the OC's case in this matter, please reach out to us at stratacommittee@acaciagardens.com.au.

TOPIC OF THE TIMES

There have been a number of questions come up in our various communication groups recently about who is responsible for certain repairs to apartments. Please take a look at [THIS](#) document published by the Stata Community Association on the topic. If you can't find what you need to know, please ask your Building Manager for advice.

SOCIAL & RECOMMENDATIONS

Obviously going out at the moment is not possible but we can suggest some great take away places nearby for the nights you don't want to cook:

- Kopitiam Café – Malaysian – Phone: 02 9282 9883
- Shiba's Kitchen – Japanese – Phone: 0412769678
- Wok Station – Thai – Phone: 02 9518 8188

COOK UP A STORM

Gratin Dauphinois (Potato Gratin)



Ingredients:

- 2Kg potatoes (floury baking potatoes) peeled and thinly sliced (2mm thick)
- 1.5 L of milk
- 250 ml of cream
- 400g of grated cheese (gruyere or parmesan)
- 2-3 cloves of garlic finely chopped
- Black pepper
- Nutmeg (ground)

Instructions:

- Preheat the oven to 180C.
- Alternate one thin layer of cheese, one layer of potato slices, black pepper and nutmeg (every other layer) and add chopped garlic every other layer, into a large rectangle oven dish.
- Choose a dish big enough so that it is not filled up to the top.
- Once you have used all the potatoes, mix the milk and cream with a whisk and pour over the top, making sure you just cover the potatoes but no more, then finish with a generous layer of grated cheese.
- Place in the oven and cook for 2 hours. If the top browns too quickly, lower the temperature to 150C, then increase the cooking time to 3 hours.
- It will boil gently, hence, you need ensure the dish is not full to the top, otherwise it will boil over and make a mess in the oven!
- Enjoy this dish with a roast or slow cooked meat...perfect winter dish!
- The left over can be eaten cold (guilty your honour) or gently reheated (no microwave please).

WHERE TO FIND HELP:

STAGE 1 BUILDING MANAGEMENT is located at 288 WATTLE STREET between the hours of:

08:00 and 18:00 – Monday to Friday

09:00 and 13:00 – Saturday

2 hours per day – on Sundays and Public holidays

Contact details: **9518 8088** and acacia@centralsydneyrealty.com.au

STAGE 2 BUILDING MANAGEMENT is located at the office in the reception area of 71 JONES STREET between the hours of:

08:00 and 16:00 – Monday to Friday

10:00 and 13:00 – Saturday

Contact details: **0409 095 297** and acacia.management@meriton.com.au

SECURITY FOR BOTH STAGE 1 AND 2 is located at the office in the reception area of 71 JONES STREET between the hours of:

18:00 and 06:00 – Monday to Friday

And then 14:00 Saturday until 06:00 Monday (weekend)

Contact details: **0410 408 873**

HAVING PROBLEMS CONTACTING BUILDING MANAGEMENT/SECURITY DURING THESE TIMES?

Please email the strata committee at: stratacommittee@acaciagardens.com.au and let us know so we can ensure the problems are logged and properly addressed.

CONTACT INFORMATION

The following are the best ways to contact the people you need:

Stage 1 Building manager (CSR) Email: buildingmanager1@acaciagardens.com.au

Stage 2 Building manager (Meriton) Mobile: 0409 095 297 Email: buildingmanager2@acaciagardens.com.au

Security (Stage 1 & 2) – Mobile: 0410 408 873

BCS – Samantha Edwards (Strata Manager) Phone: 02 8216 0398 Email: stratamanager@acaciagardens.com.au

Strata Committee (all members) Email: stratacommittee@acaciagardens.com.au

Strata Committee Chairperson (Luming) Email: chair@acaciagardens.com.au

Strata Committee Secretary (Nick) Email: secretary@acaciagardens.com.au

Strata Committee Treasurer (Matthew) Email: treasurer@acaciagardens.com.au

Any other enquiries, Email: newsletter@acaciagardens.com.au

If you haven't done so already, download the Building Management App for Stage 2 – MYBOS. Once you are registered as a user it is a great way to make maintenance requests, report issues, and it has other great resources. If you have any issues joining or using the App, please check in with Ali on level 6 at 71 Jones Street.

If you want to join the Acacia Gardens Owners groups on either WhatsApp or WeChat, or both, please email us with your phone number to be added. Email: newsletter@acaciagardens.com.au

You can find the Facebook page at: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/261530967880147>

The Acacia Gardens website is now up and running and has a lot of useful resources including new forms for renovations and pet applications. Check it out at: www.acaciagardens.com.au

QUESTIONS, FEEDBACK & SUGGESTIONS

If you would not like to receive the newsletter in the future, please email us on the same email address and we will remove you from the distribution list.

If you have any questions, feedback, requests or would like to make any suggestions, please get in touch!

Thanks for reading!

Acacia Gardens Strata Committee