

Publication Date: 31 December 2019  
YSP Podcast Transcript: Episode 193. 5 podcast highlights from 2019

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**Intro:** Welcome to Your Strata Property. The podcast for property owners looking for reliable, accurate, and bite-sized information from an experienced and authoritative source. To access previous episodes and useful strata tips, go to [www.yourstrataproperty.com.au](http://www.yourstrataproperty.com.au).

**Amanda Farmer:** Hello and welcome. I'm Amanda Farmer, and this is Your Strata Property. Happy New Year everybody. Welcome to 2020. Doesn't that have a nice ring to it? I do believe this episode is going out on the very first day of 2020. It is great to be here. We have, I know it, I can feel it, a fantastic year ahead. For all of us in strata, living in strata, serving strata properties, enjoying apartment living, 2020 is going to be a big year and what a way to kick it off. I'm going to spend a little bit of time with you today looking at some highlights from our episodes of 2019.

Now this is something that has become a little bit of a tradition for me at the beginning of each New Year, to have a look back at the previous year and let you know what I think some of the most engaging, most interesting, value-packed episodes have been throughout the previous year. I do think this is an excellent way to get to know the podcast, if you haven't been listening for a very long time. I've been recording this podcast for almost 4 years now, so we have many, many episodes. If you're new, you might not quite know where to start, so these highlight episodes are a good place and we do have one at the beginning of each year.

So if you look back at Episode 042, I brought you the highlights from 2016; episode 93, they're the highlights from 2017; and episode 144 are the highlights from 2018. Even if you're an old hand, you've been listening to the podcast for a little while, maybe you want some flashbacks, you want to head back and cover some important ground, be reminded of what the top episodes were from each of those years, then feel free to head back and check out those highlight episodes.

So today I'm going to bring you 5 highlights from 2019; really difficult to choose only 5. As I was scanning through our previous guests and the topics that were covered, so much of it I think is just vital information for those of us living in and serving apartment buildings. But I have managed to whittle it down to 5 episodes that I think you should definitely check out if you haven't already or head back and have another listen to. Sometimes on the second go round or third, you pick up a little bit more. You get those nuances. Remember that you can always get the transcripts for the episodes by heading over to the website, [yourstrataproperty.com.au/podcasts](http://yourstrataproperty.com.au/podcasts). That is where you will find all of the episodes in numerical order; our most recent episode up first, and you can click through to the show notes and access the transcripts for each one.

So the first episode I want to highlight from 2019 is Episode number 148. This was the episode where I chatted to Tony Scott, a committee member in a small Sydney strata scheme, and Tony shared precisely how his building successfully lifted a ban on pets. Now this topic was a hot one throughout 2019. We had a few Tribunal cases come through last year, which saw bans on pets being overturned, and I had a number of clients approached me wanting advice on that subject and wanting some help to achieve the same in their strata buildings. So we saw a lot of media around this topic. A number of you listened to this Episode 148 with Tony and got in touch with me saying how helpful it was. In the episode, Tony shares the step by step process that his building took to replace a blanket ban on pets with a more reasonable bylaw that permits pets with the approval of the strata committee. Now I say this is absolutely vital listening for anyone who is questioning whether or not their building's pet ban is legitimate and whether it's legal, and anyone who approaches me for advice on this topic, I immediately refer them to this very podcast episodes. So if you haven't checked out Episode 148 with Tony Scott, how one building successfully lifted a pet ban, go and check that one out.

And in 2019, the topic of pets was particularly close to my heart because 2019 was the year that my family welcomed little Louie, our puppy dog into our lives, and we do live in strata. The building that I live in has a by-law that permits pets on application to the strata committee. I do say that was not always the case. So my building was a building that originally had a ban on the keeping of animals and it doesn't now. We have, what I believe to be and what I share on the podcast to be, a more reasonable by-law, which puts in place a process for residents wanting to keep an animal to apply to the strata committee and the strata committee to consider that application on its own merits.



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**Amanda Farmer:** So we've had a great year with Louie. He is getting bigger. He is an Australian Cobberdog. Many of you have asked me what kind of a dog is Louie. He's a Cobberdog. I can put the link to some information about Cobberdog in the show notes for this episode, if you like. They're a little bit like Labradoodles, if you're wondering what a Cobberdog is. You may not have heard of them before and there is a little video of Louie on our Your Strata Property Facebook page, if you want to check him out. Just head over to Facebook and search Your Strata Property and you will find us there. Track back through some videos. I think it was about June or July 2019 that Louie came into the world. He's a little bit bigger than he was on that video, but we're definitely enjoying our time in strata with Louie.

Moving on, my next highlight from 2019 is actually the very next episode after I chatted to Tony Scott. It's Episode 149. Reena and I were chatting about strata committee meetings and the episode is titled Why Strata Committees Should Be Meeting Regularly. As we like to do, Reena and I chat every couple of weeks about our wins and challenges in strata and you tell me that these are some of your most favourite, most valuable episodes. When I think back to episode 149, I think this was really jam-packed. Some of our episodes cover so much ground and go into quite some depth about issues that I know are impacting you day-to-day.

In this particular episode, we talked about the fact that some buildings just never seem to have committee meetings. Is that legal? Is there some section in the Act that says our strata committees must be meeting and must meet a certain number of times each year? And if strata committees are not holding formal meetings, so what? Is that a problem? Why is that a problem? How do we improve the governance within our schemes by improving the way in which our strata committees make decisions.

In this episode 149, Reena and I also talked about insurance commissions. It's a topic that we covered a few times throughout 2019, another popular one with a few emails coming up after we have those discussions. I also explained how to replace an original certificate of title if you happen to misplace it. If you're a strata manager and the common property original certificate of title has gone astray, then this is the episode that explains to you the steps that you can take to get a replacement. So lots of great value in that episode. It's a really good example of the regular episodes that Reena and I record, Reena bringing the week from the perspective of a strata manager and myself from the perspective of a strata lawyer. We really love it, and it's something that we are looking forward to continuing throughout 2020.

The next episode from 2019 that I want to highlight for you today, Episode 168: Why Good Strata Managers Educate Their Owners. That was a chat between myself and strata manager, Tim Sara, very clever chap, well-known to a number of you. Tim is a strata manager at Strata Choice in Sydney and he walks us through some of his clever hacks, I called them, to ensure that he is getting the most out of every working day. We talk about setting and forgetting, the art of calendar blocking, and, importantly, why Tim thinks that educating owners should be a priority for strata managers and why making our owners smarter will not do managers out of a job.

It's actually going to set you apart and enable you to provide that higher level bespoke professional service that owners are looking for today. If you're a strata manager, Episode 168 is essential listening, and if you're not, there is plenty of gold in there for you as well. The icing on the cake for that episode, you'll hear me talk about a template motion for strata committees who want to improve communication with their strata manager. I provide a link for you to grab yourself a copy of that template. So go ahead and check out Episode 168.

Another episode that really sticks in my mind when I think about 2019 is Episode number 172: Exposing Australia's Building Defects Crisis with Dr. Nicole Johnston. Now, Nicole's research was released in June 2019. Her report is titled An Examination of Building Defects in Multi-Owned Properties, and this report forms the basis of many very important discussions about how to fix our building defects crosses. Chatting to Nicole in this episode, we talked about the most common building defects and how they are impacting the daily lives of residents. Nicole shares how we're getting it wrong when it comes to the rectification of defects. We talk pretty openly about how developers are stifling the ability of owners, corporations to exercise the legal rights available to them at the beginning of a building's life, and we address the confusing role that strata managers play in facilitating early communications with developers about defects.

Now in the show notes for that Episode, 172, you will find a link to a copy of Nicole's report. Since that episode, Nicole did quite a



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bit of media around those findings and has started her own educational sessions as well through Deakin University. So a really important episode to tune in for, especially if you are finding yourself in the middle of a building defects crisis in your own apartment building.

Finally, I want to highlight from our episodes of 2019 episode number 191: Everything You Need to Know about Strata Remedial Works with Caroline McConacchie of MaxBuild. This episode got lots and lots of attention when we published it. So many of you are looking for good quality, accurate information about remedial works, repair works within your apartment buildings, and Caroline is your go-to gal. She walks us through the essentials of remedial building works projects. She talks about why these kinds of projects have a more significant impact than other types of construction work. She gives us a framework for how to ensure a smooth project from inception to completion and actually gives us access to her free eBook that sets out the steps that she recommends strata committees and strata managers follow when involved in a remedial works project.

We talked about empowering owners to take control of their own project and identify tenants as the least informed, but most impacted parties when it comes to these types of works. This is the kind of episode that you want to keep as a ready reference. If you're not going through a remedial works project right now, you may be in future. If you're a strata manager, you absolutely will with one or more of the buildings that you're working with, and Caroline was able to pack so much into this episode. As I say during the interview, she is on my list as a guest that we need to bring back on the show for sure.

So those are the 5 episodes that I have decided to highlight for you from 2019. It was a very big year for us and for the podcast. There were so many more fabulous guests, excellent topics discussed, vital knowledge shared, but if you can get to only those 5 from 2019, you have put yourself in good stead for 2020. Exciting things ahead for us this year. You may notice a few changes on the podcast, a few things I might be doing differently. Look out for those. As always, I love to hear from you how you're enjoying the content. Any particular questions you'd like me to answer, topics to cover and definitely guests to interview. Always feel free to reach out, [amanda@yourstrataproperty.com.au](mailto:amanda@yourstrataproperty.com.au). Well, get out there. Take on 2020. I certainly am. I look forward to catching you next time.

**Outro:** Thank you for listening to Your Strata Property, the podcast which consistently delivers to property owners reliable and accurate information about their strata property. You can access all the information below this episode via the show notes at [www.yourstrataproperty.com.au](http://www.yourstrataproperty.com.au). You can also ask questions in the comments section, which Amanda will answer in her upcoming episodes. How can Amanda help you today?

