

Publication Date: 21 December 2021
YSP Podcast Transcript: Episode 293. The Top 5 of 2021

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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.

Amanda Farmer: Hello and welcome. I am your podcast host Amanda Farmer. And this is our final podcast episode for the year 2021. I'll be packing up the mic after this one, but only for a couple of weeks. I'll be back with you in the first week of January 2022. In this episode, I'm sharing our top 5 podcast episodes. The top 5 out of all of our episodes brought to you in 2021, we have published a total of 48 episodes in 2021. That's almost an episode every week, but these are what the team has calculated to be the top 5 most popular episodes published this year. We do look at the number of downloads on each episode. It's not quite an exact science, but we balance out the recency of the episode with the number of downloads and think we have a pretty good idea of the top 5 most popular.

This is a really good way to make sure you haven't missed what others have clearly found really helpful here on the podcast, or perhaps if you are one of our many very loyal listeners, this is a recap for you. I do make somewhat of an appointment to cover off our top 5 around about this time each year. If you're new to the podcast and want to check out the past top fives, episode 245 is the place to go to hear the top 5 of 2020 and episode 193, the top 5 of 2019. But today I have for you, our top 5 most popular podcast episodes of 2021. All links for you in the show notes, links to go and check out these episodes. If you haven't already come across it, there is always a link to access the transcript for each episode, a very popular option for our busy strata managers and strata committee members who want to share all the goodness from the podcast.

But here we go. I'm going to count down from 5 to 1, down to our most popular, most downloaded episode of 2021. First up number 5, this was a chat between Reena Van Aalst my often co-host here on the podcast and me, episode number 253 titled, Can I force my building to have a meeting in person? This episode was published in February this year and in it, Reena and I were calling out a downside. One of the downsides of the electronic age we had been hearing from owners who were frustrated that their strata committees, sometimes their strata manager, were insisting on electronic meetings, that is, meetings by Zoom, by video conference. And in some cases pre-meeting electronic voting with no voting, no decision making happening in the actual meeting. And we asked the question, are committees silencing owners by insisting on electronic meetings and pre-meeting electronic voting for every meeting? That seems to have struck a chord with you all.

In that chat we also discussed a building that had turned a blind eye to illegal renovations, many years down the track, having to unravel the results of that approach and Reena also shared the success for one of her buildings tapping into the power of a strata loan. So episode number 253, our fifth most popular episode published in 2021. Next up, you may have guessed that this topic would have made it into the top 5 for 2021, pets. Episode 276, new law for New South Wales: does your "pet" by-law stack up? This was a solo from me published in August this year. It was just a few days after our new legislation commenced in New South Wales, making it much easier for residents in our strata buildings to keep pets in their homes. This is an episode I have referred many people to since publishing it. I spend time unpacking the new Section 137B in our Strata Schemes Management Act here in New South Wales.

What does it say? What does it mean? And how does it impact existing by-laws that restrict the keeping of animals? A lot has been happening in that space since our new legislation commenced. Many buildings reviewing their pets by-laws, or keeping of animals by-laws, and many residents taking on new furry, feathery, perhaps family members. If you're interested in pets in New South Wales strata buildings and precisely what the current law is, episode 276 is a great place to start.

Counting down to number 3 on our list of the top 5 most popular episodes for 2021. This is an episode published back in January almost a year ago. It is my warning to autocratic secretaries, episode number 248. I shared my 4 key takeaways from a hard fought tribunal case where I acted for an owner who successfully obtained orders for the appointment of a compulsory strata manager. A topic that I have found increasingly popular since we have been in the depths of the pandemic with so many people at home and all the flows from that for our apartment residents.

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Amanda Farmer: The tribunal can appoint a strata manager with all powers of the owners corporation, the strata committee, a type of administrator, where a community is dysfunctional, not functioning satisfactorily are the words in the legislation.

And in this particular case, the tribunal member making the order for the appointment of the strata manager made a finding that the secretary of the strata committee had conducted themselves in a way that was autocratic. I know after receiving some feedback after that episode, that many listeners thought themselves to be in a similar situation in respect of their strata committee. The link to the reasons published by the tribunal for that decision is in the notes under episode 248, well worth a read if you're involved in or intending to be involved in an application for the compulsory appointment of a strata manager. So that's my episode 248 warning to autocratic secretaries, third on the list of the year's most popular episodes. Second on the list, the pandemic certainly makes an appearance. This is episode 271 published in July titled, Avoid this mask-wearing mistake. Catchy title?

Sure got a lot of you tuning in. I published this episode shortly after our New South Wales government for the first time mentioned strata buildings and strata common property in its public health orders. This was the time when masks were mandated on indoor common property in greater Sydney residential strata buildings. I explained the content and the effect of that order and pointed out that it did not make mask wearing a condition of entry, which I was hearing some building managers, some committees and strata managers were advising. And I suggested that buildings be very careful about refusing access to residents on the grounds they were not wearing a mask. And today I record this episode at a time when masks are after about 5 months, no longer mandatory on strata common property, and indeed in many indoor areas and public spaces.

And finally, the number one most popular, most downloaded podcast episode for 2021 as published in 2021, by quite a margin. I have to say, especially when I consider that it was published only in September this year. It is my chat with Ross Taylor, episode 277, The \$800 leak fixed for \$2.5 million: how we're getting strata remedial works wrong. Ross Taylor, a Strata Remedial Specialist, particularly when it comes to waterproofing. "He is a man who can see the leaks on the drawings," he told me, and at the time we spoke, he was working closely with the New South Wales government to ensure our future apartment buildings are a little more watertight than they have been so far.

We spoke perhaps a little controversially about why our older leaky buildings are going through remedial works projects 3 times over in some circumstances with owners wasting potentially hundreds of thousands of dollars on unnecessary remedial work. Ross spoke very frankly about his on the ground experience and part of the popularity of episode number 277 may well have been the fact that our building commissioner, our New South Wales building commissioner, David Chandler, listened to and shared that episode through his own networks and reaching out to me and thanked me for interviewing Ross and tackling that important issue on the podcast.

So those are our top 5 most popular episodes brought to you throughout 2021. I enjoyed recording and bringing to you every single one of them, as well as the 43 odd other episodes we published this year. We are closing in on episode number 300. I've been bringing you the podcast since 2016, looking forward to reaching that milestone in just a couple of months. If you haven't yet checked out our top 5 for 2021, perhaps there's some summer listening there for you. I wish you all a happy and restful festive season, a happy new year. I can't wait to see you all, hear from you all, share with you all in 2022. I'll catch 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. You can also ask questions in the comment section, which Amanda will answer in her upcoming episodes. How can Amanda help you today?