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**YSP Podcast Transcript: 473 - Top 5 of 2025**

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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 to our very first podcast episode for the year 2026. I am your host, Strata Lawyer, Amanda Farmer, and 2026 is a bit of a special year, because it is our 10th year of the podcast. Yes, we published our first episode in 2016. March 2016, it was, and here we are today with episode number 473.

We are on track to crack 500 episodes later this year. Stay tuned for that one. When I first started the podcast, I'm not sure I really thought about whether I would still be here doing this 10 years later. I do remember my focus was on just getting three episodes recorded, published out into the world for you to listen to and let me know what you thought.

Apparently, you liked it. I cringe a little bit when I think about those early episodes and how they must sound. No, I did not go back and re-listen. Thank you. Those of you who have been with me for the last 10 years, I know there are so many of you who have been in strata, whether as strata managers, as owners, who have been listening in and often tell me how much you enjoy the podcast. It has been such a privilege to be able to deliver this content for you in this way over the last 10 years. That ain't going anywhere, anytime soon, another 10 years. Alright. Let's see how we go.

Today, we are doing something that has become a bit of a tradition around here. Almost every January, I share the top five Most listened to podcast episodes from the previous year. Today, we are looking back at 2025. If you're new to the podcast, you'll find that we have a new podcast episode every week or so. Sometimes it's every couple of weeks, but we do try to get something out every week, and there's a lot.

You've just heard me say there are 472 other episodes. So if you're coming in at around this stage, the top five episodes are a great place to start if you are new, if you wanna know what has really struck a chord with other listeners in the past 12 months, or if you're not new and you just wanna catch up on episodes you might have missed that were really popular.

You might have a little bit of fomo, then these are some great reminders for you. These are the episodes that I find were generally pretty timely, practical, sometimes maybe a little controversial, and I'm guessing from their popularity that they answered the questions that mattered most to you last year. As always, direct links to listen to each of the episodes.

I'm about to summarise here for you are in the show notes for today's episode, and when you click through to those episodes, you'll be able to also access the transcripts of each of the episodes if you prefer to read, rather than listen, or you wanna share those transcripts with your committee, with your strata manager.

Or with your clients, you'll find the show notes and all of the links over at [yourstrataproperty.com.au/podcasts](http://yourstrataproperty.com.au/podcasts). You'll see this episode 473 on the page or in the list, and that's where your access to those resources is. Alright, let's get into it. I'm gonna count these down in reverse order, starting with the fifth most popular episode of 2025.

It was episode number 468. We titled this one, *Levy recovery confusion: untangling NSW's new strata laws*. Now, like many of our podcast episodes, this is one of those episodes that. We recorded because I heard from you loud and clear. Amanda, this is confusing. We need help on this. This was a chat together with strata manager, Reena Van Aalst, my regular co-host here on the podcast.

We were focused on the new laws about levy recovery in New South Wales, particularly the uncertainty around payment plans, new rules for payment plans, and the recovery of legal costs that are incurred when an owners corporation is pursuing an owner for unpaid levies. When can an owners corporation recover those costs from the owner in default?

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Now, I think what made this episode resonate was the fact that even professionals, lawyers, and experienced strata managers were. And to some extent, still are, a bit unsure about how these new provisions will operate in practice. I'm certainly answering a lot of questions about payment plans and levy recovery over in our member forum.

2025 was very much a year of transition and change in this space. Government stepping in to address claims of financial hardship in strata. That's gonna be continuing into 2026. We're still getting used to this new legislation, or this part of our new legislation. If you are dealing with arrears, levy arrears, payment plans or uncertainty about recovering costs, episode 468 is one worth revisiting.

And I'm sure it is something we are going to continue to talk about on the podcast this year as we all get used to these new laws in practice being applied and applying them in our communities. That's not all that we covered in episode number 468. Reena and I also talked about building managers and what happens when records go missing.

What responsibility does a building manager have to maintain, keep up to date the owners corporation's records and hand those over to the strata manager when the building manager's contract comes to an end. I also shared the words that I say. Every strata manager has to be prepared to say to their committees when expert advice is received about fixing the common property.

If you get an expert's report with an opinion on what the owners corporation should be doing to properly repair and maintain its common property, I say the strata manager has a key role to play in making sure that work gets done, or at least the committee understands its legal obligation to ensure that work gets done

Go back and have a listen to episode number 468 if you wanna know what those magic words are. Moving on to our fourth most popular episode of 2025. It is episode number 446. In that episode, I was joined by Helen Kowal and Deborah Lockart to unpack the proposed changes to the National Construction Code.

NCC 2025 and the very real risk Helen and Deborah shared with us that repair and remedial works in existing strata buildings could become dramatically more expensive and more delayed. Under the proposed changes to the NCC, we talked about unintended consequences, projects that currently cost tens of thousands of dollars, potentially blowing out into the hundreds of thousands, simply because planning approvals might be required where they never were before.

And what stood out here for me was this practical reality for owners' leaking balconies. We talked about water ingress. Buildings that can't wait another year for approvals. This is work that has to be done now. Maybe there's a Tribunal order requiring the owners corporation to do the work by a particular deadline.

This is real. This is happening out there. There is a flow on impact when these laws are changed without consideration for what's going on in the real world for strata owners, an impact on legal proceedings, on insurance, on levies. And certainly on your own general well-being, in your strata building. I think this episode was so popular because we were able to call out.

What many of you are seeing happening in your buildings right now, and Helen and Deborah did issue a little bit of a scary warning about what could happen, how this could get worse if reform is not carefully calibrated. I must listen. This one is if your building is facing major repairs. As for the current status of NCC 2025.

As far as I am aware, that consultation is still underway. It was only last week, I saw a LinkedIn post from Deborah Lockart sharing that ACRA is still out there representing the interests of apartment owners, highlighting these unintended consequences of NCC 2025 in New South Wales. This is all happening while Commonwealth Treasury is seeking submissions now from interested parties. Their focus is, as many of you'll know, on building as many homes as possible, as quickly as possible.

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And to that end, they are wanting to streamline the NCC ACRA. Deborah, Helen, I know are still doing some really important advocacy work to make sure that strata buildings and strata owners don't get lost in that reform. I will add a link into the show notes if you wanna be part of that Commonwealth Treasury consultation.

If you do want to make a submission link there for you, I think submissions will close within a few weeks of us publishing this episode. So click on over and see if that is still open, if you wanna be part of that. My thanks to Deborah and Helen for sharing their knowledge, their expertise, their energy, for the benefit of all of us in strata on that issue and for joining us for episode 446. I'm really pleased that one made the top five. Coming in third place, episode number 437. We summarise this one in the title as *Nasty Emails | Compulsory Appointments | New Year Wins*. Maybe that got your attention.

This was a wide-ranging discussion between me, and Reena Van Aalst, touching on communication standards in strata. We talked about the reality of abusive emails being sent to strata managers acknowledged that is happening. We talked about the pressure that was being felt across the sector. We also talked about compulsory appointments.

What they mean for transparency, for record keeping and what owner expectations might be around those appointments, misplaced or not, and how good practice can still exist even when a building is in crisis. I think this episode probably acknowledged something that many of you have been experiencing, whether you're an owner or you're a manager.

Strata is emotional. Poor communication on either side of the coin just makes everything harder unnecessarily. So this episode was released pretty early in 2025. One of our first episodes for the year, I think it was. And when I look back, I think it set the tone for a year where we just kept coming back to discussions around professionalism, around boundaries, empathy, and leadership in community living.

So check out episode 437. If some of that sounds like something you wanna know a little bit more about, just edging into second place. Second most popular podcast episode of 2025. It was episode 438. *Blame it on "the strata"*. We called this one, *BBlame it on "the strata"*. A solo episode from me, drawn from one of my Friday Live chats, which we often do over on our Facebook page.

Another discussion that clearly struck a chord. I was being a little tongue-in-cheek. With this title and using this term in the chat, blaming the strata. As most of you all know, there is no such thing as the strata, though a lot of people do use that term. I think trying to refer to the owners corporation or the body corporate, that legal entity that is established on registration of a strata plan and has many and varied legal responsibilities for common property and for meeting important legal obligations.

I think those who might be new to living in or owning a strata property fall into referring to that entity as the strata. I do discourage it. We're not quite sure whether you're referring to the strata manager, maybe you're referring to the committee, or you're referring to the owners corporation or body corporate, or maybe just the building or maybe the common property.

We don't know, but clarity is important and hopefully, if you're here tuning in, gaining this knowledge. It's important to you as well. This episode was all about how frustration in buildings often gets directed at the wrong place, and how poor communication can quickly escalate when expectations, roles and responsibilities are not well understood.

We talked again about setting boundaries, the role of bylaws in regulating conduct, and why professionalism matters. And communicating in a business-like or professional tone, even if you are an owner or a committee member, and certainly if you are a strata manager. What I think made this episode so popular was its honesty.

We don't pretend here that frustrations aren't real or justified. That deplorable behavior doesn't happen on either side owners or strata managers, but we do challenge ourselves and challenge each other to do better, to communicate more clearly, to take responsibility for how we show up in shared communities, and I trust you'll find some really practical guidance on how to do that in episode number 438.

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And so we arrive at the most popular podcast episode for 2025, taking out the number one spot is episode number 441, titled *The 5 strata law reforms you didn't see coming*. Another solo episode from me. This episode broke down five key strata law reforms in New South Wales that I felt might have been flying under the radar at the time I recorded that episode.

From memory, I believe we were faced with the commencement date for one of the three tranches of legislation that started in New South Wales last year, and there was a lot that was unknown or not understood or not being talked about that I wanted to share on the podcast. Despite these issues having very real consequences for owners corporations, committees, and managers.

I talked about the new requirement for New South Wales Strata Committee members to undergo mandatory training. Yes, that legislation has been made, but the requirement to do the training is not yet in place. That's because the training isn't ready yet. We are hopeful that's all going to be happening in the second half of 2026.

Stay tuned. I'll definitely be talking about that some more this year. I explained the new powers that Fair Trading was going to have and now does have to intervene in buildings that are not properly meeting their repair and maintenance duties. I talked about unfair contract terms and how they were being brought to the fore with this reform.

Again, payment plans and levy recovery and accessibility infrastructure. What's that all about? How is it defined? How is the installation of accessibility infrastructure approved? This episode confirms something that I've known in my bones, I think, and is really the foundation of this podcast. You want to understand the law, preferably before it impacts you, and you are forced to interact with it, not after. As you're hearing, 2025 was a big year for legislative change.

This episode, like this podcast as a whole, I think, helped many of you feel like you're across the changes, even in the most rudimentary of respects. You had those changes on your radar. You had heard me speak about them on the podcast, and that is all I suggest you try to achieve when you're dealing with anything new. Just be aware. You don't have to know all the sections, you don't have to know the details. All of that will come. You will get used to it, especially if you're a strata manager interacting with this law regularly.

There is more reform coming, especially in New South Wales this year, so you'll certainly be hearing more from me about that. And the best thing you can do is just keep your ears open. Just be open to hearing about what the changes are, having them on your radar. Let's swing back around, hey, at the end of this year or in January 2027, and see how much we talked about reform changes to the law this year, and how popular those episodes were.

So there you have it, the top five podcast episodes of 2025. Looking back at this list, a few themes stand out to me. Absolutely. You wanted to hear about law reform and uncertainty around legal changes, rising costs, and pressures on repair and maintenance duties. Communication breakdowns came up a lot and how to fix them, and you really had an appetite.

Four, practical, grounded, real, not just theoretical guidance and solutions. None of that surprises me. These are the issues shaping strata living. I don't expect that to change anytime soon. As we move into 2026, my commitment remains the same. Helping you to understand your legal rights, your obligations, and your options so you can make better decisions and live or work more peacefully and more profitably in strata.

Thank you for listening. For sharing this podcast so widely and so generously for the past 10 years, and for just being part of this community. I appreciate you, and I'll catch you all in the next episode. Bye for now.

**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 [yourstrataproperty.com.au](http://yourstrataproperty.com.au).