

Strata Community Association (Vic) 2022 Election Priorities - Victorian Greens response

1. Establishment of a dedicated Victorian strata helpline to assist strata lot owners and residents in seeking information and advice prior to dispute resolution processes.

The Victorian Greens support the establishment of a dedicated Victoria strata helpline for strata lot owners and residents. We know that strata law is a complex subject matter, and that it can be difficult for residents and owners to understand complicated owners corporation legislation and rules.

While Consumer Affairs Victoria provides some guidance on living in an owners corporation, the majority of this is generic information on CAV's website, and it is difficult for residents to obtain specific advice. With more Victorians living in medium density housing, a dedicated support service is greatly needed to allow residents to access the advice they need.

In the next term of government the Greens will advocate for more support for lot owners and residents living in owners corporations building, including the creation of a dedicated strata helpline for owners and residents to obtain information and advice.

2. Establishment of a minimum educational standard for owners corporation managers and mandatory CPD quotas, in alignment with Victoria's commitment to Australian Mutual Recognition (AMR).

The Victorian Greens support the establishment of a working group to consider appropriate minimum standards for owners corporation managers, including minimum education standards. While Victoria recently made some changes to improve the quality of owners corporation managers, we are still lagging behind other states where minimum education standards are in place. A lack of training or education increases the likelihood that managers will make poor or even corrupt decisions in the course of their roles.

We will support the establishment of a working group to consider appropriate minimum standards for owners corporation managers, including ways to support volunteer managers in smaller owners corporations to obtain the necessary skills and training.

3. Establishment of a Victorian Strata Sustainability Fund

The Victorian Greens support the establishment of a Victorian Strata Sustainability Fund and will advocate for funding to establish this fund and increase uptake of energy, water and waste efficiency measures and other sustainability measures. We know that many residents in medium density apartments and townhouses have been locked out of accessing sustainability initiatives like solar, and have been advocating for change to allow apartments to more easily access solar, including through the Solar Homes program. We are also advocating for over a thousand more EV chargers across the state, including in residential apartment blocks, and for increases to minimum energy efficiency and sustainability standards for new developments.

4. Partnership between SCA (Vic) and Sustainability Victoria to provide education and administrative support

The Victorian Greens also support increased education for both strata lot owners and industry about how to incorporate sustainability infrastructure and measures into medium density buildings, including through a new sustainability officer to provide education and administrative support as part of a new strata sustainability fund.

5. SCA (Vic) recommends the Victorian Government address building defects proactively, with the single most effective measure being the creation of an accessible base building information portal managed by the VBA.

The Victorian Greens know that the prevalence of building defects in Victoria's residential development is a failure of government regulation. Defects contribute to stress and anxiety, impact on residents' health and wellbeing, and can pose a safety risk, as well as being expensive and timely to rectify. We support a proactive government response to building defects and would support industry-recommended measures to monitor and reduce the building defects, such as a VBA information portal.

6. Greater action taken by the Victorian Government to address existing loopholes in the Domestic Building Insurance (DBI) scheme, as well as illegal phoenixing activity within the building and development sectors.

The Victorian Greens support better accountability and transparency in building and development, and increased protections for consumers, including through addressing loopholes and greater action on illegal phoenixing activity.