

# NEWSLETTER

Welcome to the first edition of the NewActon South newsletter for 2024.

I extend a warm welcome to all new owners and tenants who have recently joined our community. I encourage those who have not yet had the chance to attend our social evenings to please do so and use it as an opportunity to meet your neighbours and immerse yourself in our vibrant community.

At our recent Annual General Meeting (AGM) on 13 February 2024, significant matters were discussed and decisions made. If you were unable to attend, I urge all owners to familiarize yourselves with the meeting's outcomes by reviewing the Minutes. Following our engagement of Grady Strata and Facilities on a short-term basis late last year, and a favourable decision at the AGM, we will be extending this engagement long term. We welcome Grady Strata, Facilities, and Building Management, appreciating their unique service model and proactive approach.

The Executive Committee elected at the February AGM includes several returning members and welcomes new additions. We are grateful for the trust residents have placed in our committee. Each member is not only highly active but also deeply passionate about fulfilling their obligation to deliver the best value while meeting our community's needs and expectations.

Furthermore, we are excited to welcome interested Owners to participate actively by considering joining one of our sub-committees, including those focused on Art, Electric Vehicles, Building Maintenance, and Community (inclusive of social activities and the newsletter).

Lastly, I am looking forward to working with all Owners on the Executive Committee and will ensure regular updates on our ongoing projects, including but not limited to, the carpark WiFi installation, the cladding project, as well as the updates and maintenance of art within our building.

Thank you for your continued commitment to the success of our community.

Kym Hemming  
Chair, NewActon South Executive Committee



# Introducing Grady Strata and Facilities



Grady Strata and Facilities is a locally owned, highly experienced team of property professionals.

In our eight years of operation, Grady Strata and Facilities has been established as a leading provider of strata, facilities and building management services for body corporates and their Executive Committees on the strength of our customer-centric approach, and our comprehensive understanding of, and experience in, the Canberra property market.

Grady Strata and Facilities' support of the customer experience, and emphasis on relationship building, has assisted us in retaining every complex we have been engaged to manage (strata, facilities and building management) since we commenced operations. Grady's now manage 44 complexes at an average size of 126 units with the vast majority having Grady's on-site building managers.

We currently have 31 employees and consider our people to be our best asset and the key to our success. We support our people by providing career progression pathways, ongoing training, and a work-life balance through the implementation of 'business hours' Executive Committee meetings. We regularly review the workloads of our managers and always place importance on limiting the size of a portfolio assigned to each manager. This has led to a high staff retention rate and results-based service. Importantly, supporting our people helps support you.

## How we work for you

Our Strata Manager takes the lead role and is the main contact for the Executive Committee and body corporate members. The Strata Manager coordinates activities with the Facilities Manager and on-site Building Manager. All work together to resolve any issues and ensure efficient building operations. In addition, the Director of Strata and our Director of Facilities provide strategic coordination advice on any defects, major repairs, legal matters, and budget planning.

At each site we manage we prepare a detailed Building Manual which outlines procedures, policies, and task sheets. It is also an easy reference point for replacement managers when there are staff absences. We also ensure that there is always at least one other (but typically two or more) Building Manager familiar with operations at each site. This ensures business continuity for the Complex, Executive Committee or Owner's Corporation.

Our Building Managers have extensive experience and skills in property-related fields. Before joining the Grady's team, our Building Managers worked in a wide range of property jobs, such as carpentry, electrical, mechanical, maintenance, landscaping and gardening, cleaning, and security. This means we have the combined practical experience to manage all types of buildings and facilities.

# Meet your Strata Manager

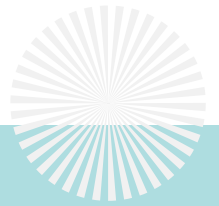
Ysabella Gills has experience in managing high-end complexes such The Avenue Turner (229 units), The Parade Campbell (250 units) and The Sullivan Lyneham (176 units).

Ysabella is a highly motivated and hardworking individual with excellent organisational and task prioritisation skills, coupled with strong written and oral communication skills. She is very approachable and has well established interpersonal skills – perfect for strata management.

Ysabella has a double degree in Political Science and Arts (Australian National University) and prior to joining Grady Strata worked at Parliament House undertaking various roles within Department of the House of Representatives and alongside The Hon Tony Smith MP.

Ysabella and Building Manager Charles regularly meet to discuss the ongoing operations of NewActon South and work as a great team. Contact Ysabella on 6251 1214 or by email [ysabella.gills@gradystrata.com.au](mailto:ysabella.gills@gradystrata.com.au).

# Meet the new building manager



Charles Peereboom recently joined NewActon South as our new Building Manager.

Charles completed his apprenticeship as a carpenter, later becoming a trades supervisor on both small and large building projects around Canberra. His trade skills and breadth of experience allows him to resolve a range of building maintenance issues without necessarily calling in outside contractors. Charles can also call on the skills and experience of his Building Manager colleagues employed by Grady at other apartment complexes. This approach to managing our building is expected to bring economies and efficiencies in maintaining our building to a high standard.

Charles is also the first professional and trade qualified Building Manager that we have had in New Acton South, and we look forward to him making a valuable contribution to our community. For most building issues he will be the first point of contact for getting work underway and reaching a solution.

If you haven't already met Charles please take a moment to introduce yourself and make him feel welcome. He's in the Building Manager's office Monday to Friday - but check the 'in/out' notice on the office door to see if he's available. He can also be seen out and about in the building doing his daily rounds and escorting contractors.











# Social events

One of the best ways to get to know your fellow members of the NAS Community is to spend some time socialising with them. To make that easy we organise a Happy Hour between 6:00 and 7:30 pm on the last Wednesday of every month. Bring along a beverage and some snacks and get to know your neighbours in a convivial atmosphere.

As a bonus several members of the Executive Committee usually attend so it's a great way to find out what's going on in the building or to raise any building issues with them during the evening.

In addition to the Happy Hours we usually have a dinner function towards the end of the year. Last year, rather than going to a restaurant, we catered for dinner in the building foyer. This proved popular and attracted a good crowd, so, in the Mortein tradition, when on a good thing, we'll stick to it.

Keep your eye out for notices in the lifts and common areas advertising the next Happy Hour and other functions throughout the year.



A man in a grey t-shirt and shorts is working on a bicycle at a repair station. The station is outdoors, with a red and white repair cart on the left and a large potted plant on the right. The background shows a modern building and lush greenery.

# Mojo Cycle

Mojo Cycle Repairs is a new locally owned bike repair shop. Now using the Goodspeed workshop on 19 Kendall Lane within the New Acton precinct Mondays to Fridays. Myles Chandler continues to wield his spanners on Saturdays and Sundays.

Founded by two local mechanics: Chris and Kieran, Mojo Cycles is an exciting new workshop aimed to be more community and sustainability focused. After a combined experience of 10 years in industry Chris and Kieran have created their first small business mojo cycles last December.

Here at Mojo Cycles we offer a comprehensive range of bike servicing options all the way from basic tube changes to wheel builds and complete bike builds.



Not only operating a workshop, we also run local community workshops for the ANU and the Haig park markets. Check N' Tune is an open community workshop designed to help upskill all kinds of cyclists in maintaining their bikes.

We are really excited to be a part of the New Acton community and to help make this an exciting and vibrant place. We would like to express our gratitude to all those in the community who have already made us feel so welcome!

Mojo Cycles is open 8:30am to 5:30 pm Mon - Fri, feel free to come see us for any inquiries or even just a chat!



# Art sub committee



The Art sub-committee has been working with Artbank to refresh NewActon South's leased collection on display in the foyer. We are really excited about ten new pieces joining the collection, with nine existing pieces remaining and seven being returned to Artbank.

The sub-committee took care to curate a collection that included diversity in the works (format, material), artists (male and female, First Nations artists, and a mix of Australian and international works) and size, in order to cover as much of the wall space as possible within budget.

We expect the pieces to change over in March, which will be about two years after the current collection was hung. The collection will be hung using the new picture hanging system, which will avoid any more hooks being attached directly to the wall.



# Ev-charging committee

The Executive Committee, along with some community volunteers on the EV Sub-Committee, have been working on progressing a plan to install electric vehicle charging in our parking areas.

A survey of owners and residents last year indicated popular support for the project, though there was also resistance from some owners. The project is quite complex with a variety of competing and sometimes contradictory factors at play, including cost, advancing technology, limited electricity supply to the building, future demands on our electricity supply as gas is phased out and hot water being electrically heated, possible fire risk, and insurance considerations.

With our existing infrastructure it is possible for three extra chargers to be installed, but the demand for chargers has far outstripped that supply.

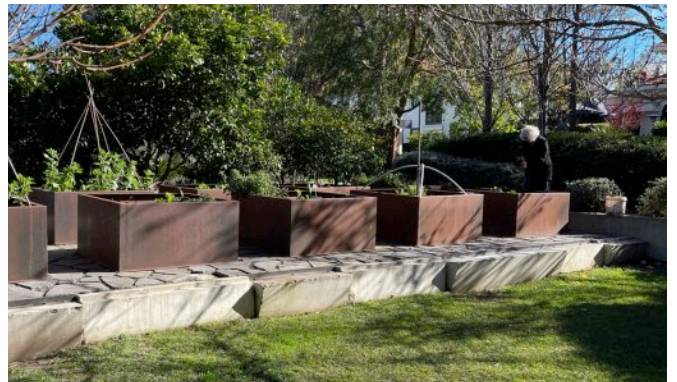
The Executive Committee made the decision to not allow those additional charging installations to be pursued because there was no fair way to allocate them on an access and equity basis. It was therefore preferable for a whole-of-building solution to be pursued to best meet the needs of current and future EV owners.

Until the financial ramifications of the flammable cladding project become clearer, the Executive Committee further decided that there would be no further progress on the EV Charging project, deciding it would be inappropriate to ask owners for funds for that project while, potentially, simultaneously introducing a levy for cladding remediation.

The EV sub-committee will continue to investigate charging options in the meantime so that once it becomes feasible we can progress the project.



# Community Garden



Located on the grounds at the western end of the building is the flourishing community garden. The garden consists of many raised garden beds and four very large compost bins. The garden is there for everyone's enjoyment. Please feel free to contribute. Only take what you need and please be respectful of other people's plantings.

# Budget & Levies

## Sinking Fund Budget

There was some commentary and discussion among Owners at the February AGM about a “Contingency” line of \$200,000 within the total Sinking Fund budget for Financial Year 2023/24.

Nomenclature aside, continuing to provide for a Contingency allocation was to reflect that \$243,000 was expended against that provision in 2022/23 year notwithstanding the original budget estimate of \$20,000. This expenditure reflected the harsh reality that there was a range of plant and equipment failures and unprogrammed essential maintenance required last year. While this was a significant overspend against one budget line item, the 2022/23 financial year closed with an overall Sinking Fund underspend of \$514,000 against its approved budget.

In drafting the current Sinking Fund budget, the Executive Committee was mindful that further expenditure would be required this financial year for structural remediation and other major maintenance or plant replacement issues. The Contingency line of \$200,000.00 was a best estimate at the time, as the full extent of works required had not been fully assessed and costed.

While many budget lines were based on past expenditure and known, costed or likely costs, there remained the ‘...known unknowns and unknown unknowns...’ to paraphrase to Donald Rumsfeld. These include significant issues such as the resurgence in façade leaks; water penetrations in apartments and hallways, and in the carparks; and, failing hydraulic infrastructure such as the reticulating hot water pipes present throughout our building. There are likely more issues to be identified.

The Committee is working with Grady Strata and Facilities to commission whole-of-building assessments, remediation programs and costs for these types of major building works. Previously, matters such as leaks had been repaired on an ad hoc basis that, while expedient at the time, did not address likely systemic issues and possibly came at a higher individual repair cost. This is not to say that immediate repairs will not be actioned, but that they will be further assessed in the context of any broader and emerging issues.

The Contingency budget line will be redefined once the major assessments are finalised and split into better-defined budget lines. Some maintenance and plant replacement arising will likely need to be programmed in the budget out-years. This will also inform the drafting of the updated Sinking Fund Plan to be commissioned shortly and then presented at the next AGM.

This whole process might result in the need to spend more against some individual Sinking Fund budget lines this financial year than was originally estimated. This would require some trade-off or deferral against other budget lines. This is simply part of the overall budget management process as actual expenditure is established during the course of the financial year. The Committee will continue, as always, to manage expenditure within the overall budget bottom line of \$711,330 that was approved at the AGM.





# Levy Notices

Levy notices have been issued by email following the approval of the Administrative and Sinking Fund budgets at the February AGM. Owners may also access their levy notices through the 'Levy Notices' menu shortcut on the Grady Strata [portal](#).

Please note that the levy notices include a new DEFT payment reference number. Owners should update their bank account payment address book accordingly.

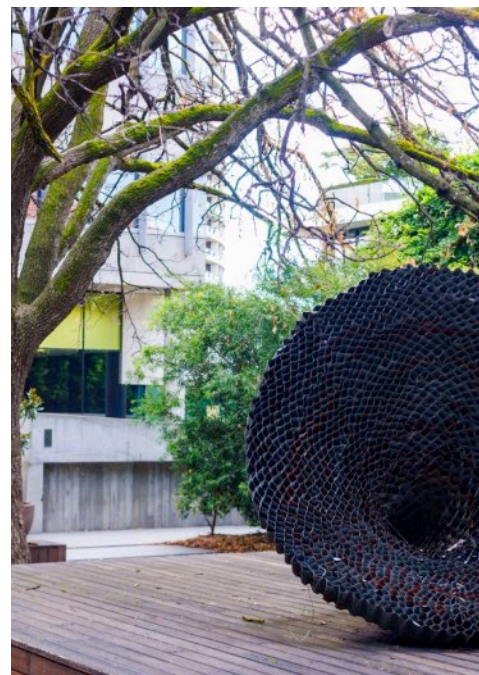
The first levy notice, reflecting the approved Financial Year 2023/24 budget, is due for payment by 13 March 2024. Owners may also pay their entire levy liability for this financial year in one instalment should they so wish.

The current levy notice also includes an adjustment for water consumption to 31 December 2023 and any overdue levy payments from 1 November 2023.

The levy notices are calculated on the following basis: total levies due this financial year, less the levy paid 1 November (where applicable), with the remaining levy balance divided into three equal parts for the quarters remaining for payment in 2024 (being due 13 March, 1 May and 1 August).

Once having paid the levy due 13 March 2024, owners may also wish to consider pre-paying their levies in instalments on, say, a fortnightly or monthly basis should that best suit their financial circumstances. In this way, a credit balance is established before the next levy round is due for payment.

Simply set this facility up through your online banking application, making sure that your updated DEFT payment reference number is used.



# Other Updates

## **GARAGE DOOR**

The garage door open/close function has failed a few times this year. If you experience this in the future, please report the fault to the Building Manager if he is onsite - or to Grady Strata on 6251 1214 (including after hours).

If the manual override has been used, please also advise the Building Manager or Grady Strata without delay. The door will remain open - and pose a security risk - until reset.

Otherwise, please do not activate the manual door-opening override switch unless in an emergency.

## **CONCRETE SLAB CRACKS**

A major piece of work undertaken last year was repairing the cracks in the concrete slabs within the lower carparks and on some residential levels. This was in an attempt to stop water damage to apartments, hallways, vehicles and storage cages.

Unfortunately, recent severe rain and storms have confirmed that further work remains to be done. Areas affected or otherwise identified will be repaired.

If you see any water dripping through cracks in the carpark roofs or from pipes or in other areas, please let the Building Manager know as soon as possible.



## SKIP BIN & BULKY WASTE

We are looking at options for the next skip bin to be put in place in coming weeks, including using the ACT Government's free service should it be available.

The skip bin will allow residents to dispose of bulky items that must not be placed in the refuse room. So, if you have unused objects such as furniture or broken items lying around, keep an eye out for the skip bin notices. If anything is recyclable, such as cardboard packaging, please break it up and place it in the refuse room recycling bins.

This skip day also seems to turn into a "trash and treasure" hunt where many people's trash is recycled and put to good use by other members of our community.

## WINDOW CLEAN AND WINDOW LEAKS

Our next building-wide window clean will be scheduled once further quotations have been received.

As costly external rope access is required, along with scissor-lifts for the lower levels, we are also seeking to coordinate the window cleaning job with an initial inspection of the building's facade where there are known window leaks.

Grady Strata is compiling a list of apartments known to suffer window leaks. If you've noticed water coming into your apartment through the window frames or seals after the recent heavy rains and squalls, please [email](#) our Strata Manager Ysabella Gills if you haven't done so already.

The initial inspection of the façade and window leak areas will then assist in determining the next steps.

## GENERAL SECURITY

While currently there has been a decrease in security incidents and thefts from within our building, we still ask everyone to remain vigilant and report any suspicious behaviour or entry to ACT Policing, or the Building Manager, Grady Strata or a member of the Executive Committee.

Please also try to prevent cars and people 'tailgating' you to gain entry into our building.







# Tips & Hints

Recent apartment leaks are a timely reminder to review your contents insurance and to do some preventative maintenance. It is important that all residents are aware of the location of the water isolation valves in their apartments.

The cold water and hot water shut off valve locations vary between apartments but are always located in a wet area (bathroom or laundry).

The shut off will be located in the ceiling of the wet area. The shut off valves are accessible through a hatch in the ceiling (see later section on opening the hatch). The stop cock for the water is generally a green lever.

## BASIN TAP MIXERS AND ISOLATION VALVES

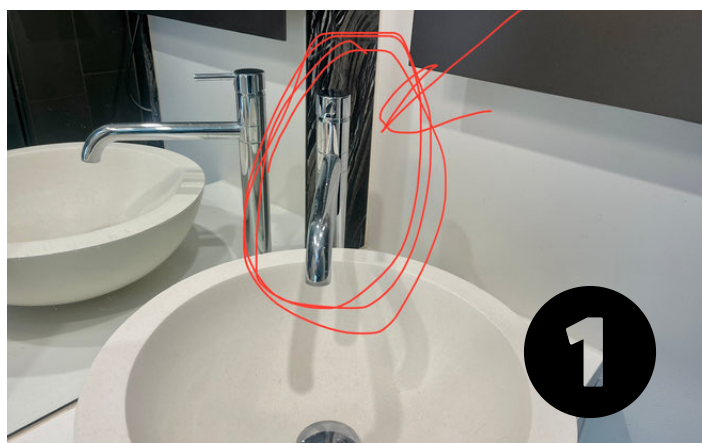
Recent leaks have been caused by drainage blocks and faulty tap mixers. If your tap begins leaking, it should have its inner cartridge replaced immediately to prevent a serious flood incident. If one tap cartridge has failed, it is quite common for the other tap cartridges to be in a similar condition.

Therefore, if a plumber is coming to attend to one tap it would make good sense to have them all attended to at the same time. If you do have a leak from your tap or if the tap fails completely and water starts to flood there are isolation valves under the sinks.

In a recent case when the tap failed, unfortunately the isolation valve had also failed, so water had to be isolated to the whole of the apartment. (Notes below on how to completely isolate the water from an apartment.)

As all the building fittings and fixtures are now 13 years of age, certain items are nearing the end of their life span. These include the tap like isolation valves and the flexible hoses in figure 4.

Here are some instructions on how to access these isolation valves. Every apartment is slightly different. Therefore, the valves may not be behind the centre drawer as pictured. These tap type valves and flexible hoses are also found in all the toilets (Figure 5), under the laundry (Figure 7), kitchen and bathroom basins and sinks (Figure 4) and some apartments have a tap in the fridge cavity. Especially if these outlets are not being used, they should be checked for correct operation or capped in case it fails.



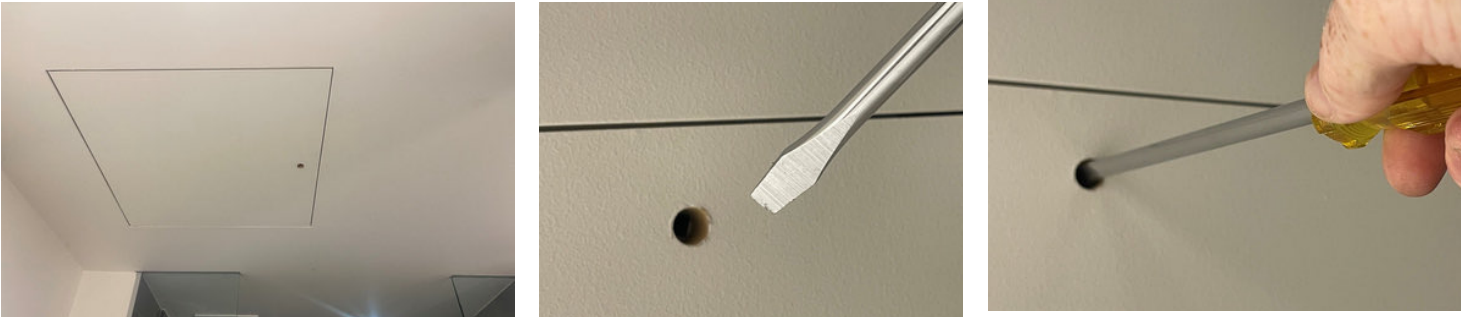


## HATCH KEY:

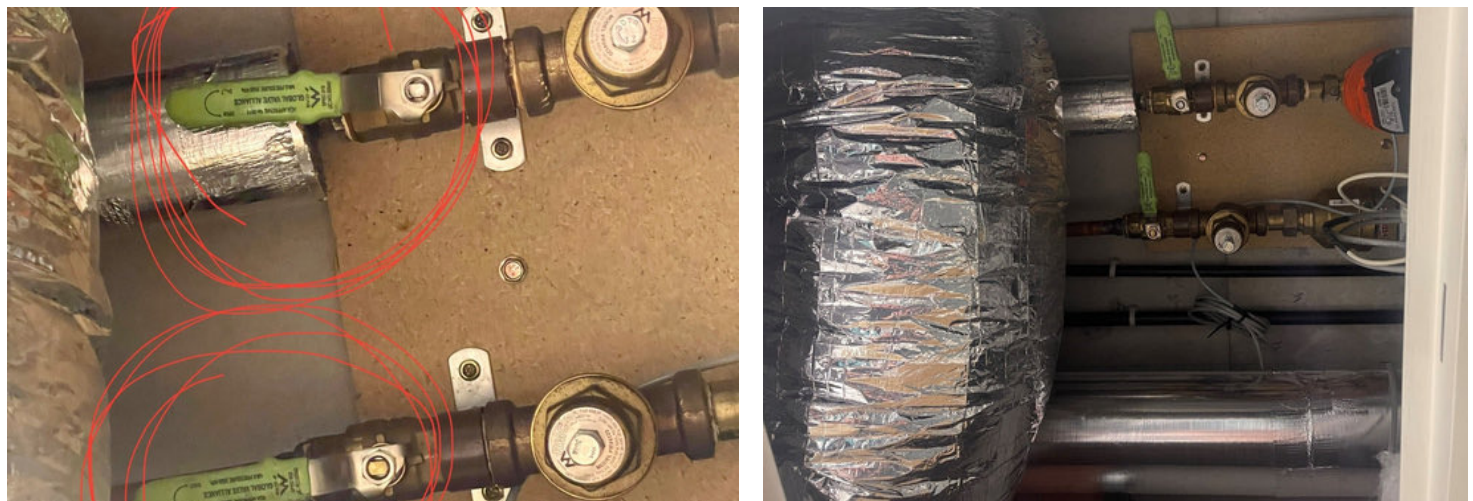
Some access hatches have a flat head screwdriver type latch to unlock, most however require a square "Key".

If you do not possess a hatch "key" they can be sourced from an internet supplier. A large screwdriver will serve the same purpose in the 8mm square hole if you do not wish to purchase a hatch key.

There are multiple vendors selling these items and an internet search for "square drive door latch" will lead to multiple options with varying prices.



The cold and hot water shut off valves are shown below. They are located in the bathroom or laundry ceiling space behind a hatch. In an emergency rotate the green levers 90 degrees to shut water off.



The toilet has an individual shut off tap which is located inside the lid of the cistern (Figure 5). These taps are often seized through non-use and it is suggested that in the event of a flexible hose burst that the water is turned off, via the cold and hot water shut off described above, prior to removing the cistern lid.



## FRIDGE PLUMBING

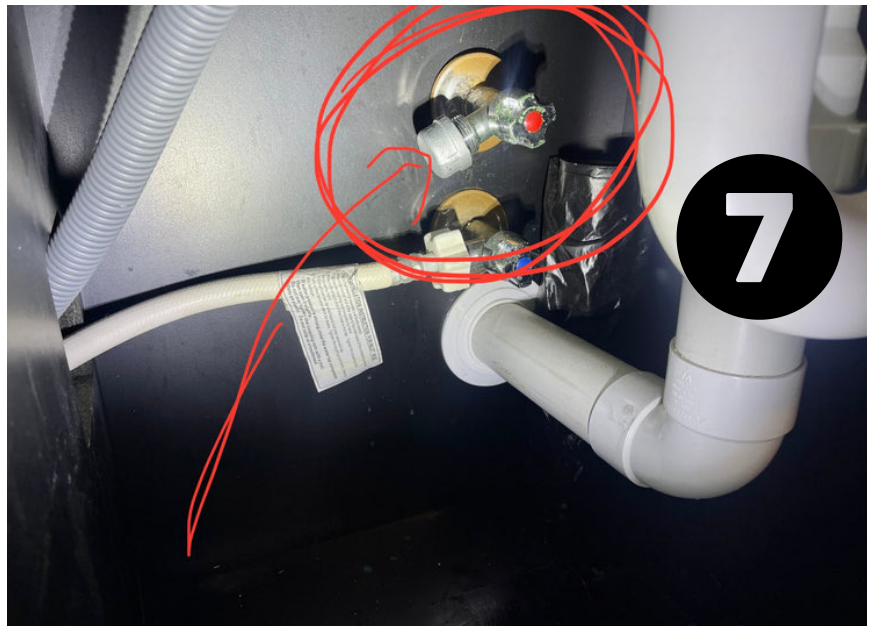
Some apartments have had plumbing installed to enable a water supply to their fridge. Because of the time since this installation many of these valves (Figure 6) are now reaching the end of their life and are subsequently failing. This has caused substantial flooding to apartments.

Please check this tap and any fittings that connect your fridge. If the tap is not used, it should be capped-off.



## WASHING MACHINE PLUMBING

Another tap that might fail is the washing machine hot water tap located in the laundry cupboard under the sink. (Figure 7) This hot water tap should also be capped-off if not used or connected to your washing machine. For example, some washing machines only draw cold water (and then heat the water if needed). (Figure 7)



## CAPPING-OFF TAPS

Washing machine taps need a 20mm cap. Other types of mini-taps generally need a 15mm cap. Especially if these outlets are not being used, they should be checked for correct operation or capped in case it fails.



## CARPET MOTHS

Be vigilant for the existence of the tiny Carpet Moth in your apartment. This tiny Moth, if left unattended to, will not only destroy your woollen clothes, but also the woollen carpets which were originally installed in most apartments. In particular, look behind your furniture, corners of each room and behind the curtains. They are not always evident in the high traffic areas



<https://safeguardpestcontrol.com.au/blog/carpet-moths-how-to-get-rid-of-carpet-moth-and-restore-your-carpet/>

### SUMMARY:

- 1) Know where to turn the water off in your apartment.
- 2) Check if your apartment fridge has taps etc (many people are unaware, and it is the taps that are not connected that are causing the biggest issues).
- 3) Think about getting a plumbing health check of your apartment.
- 4) If you are going away for an extended period, ensure that you inform Grady Strata with best contact details to reach you in case of an emergency or if access is required to your apartment. Also consider turning-off your water while you are away.
- 5) Review your insurance policy to ensure what you are and are not covered for.  
i.e Are you insured for resulting damage to other apartments?

**\*\* Make sure you update your details with Grady Strata to ensure you receive community notices.**

# NewActon South website



Our web site at [www.newactonsouth.com.au](http://www.newactonsouth.com.au) is used to provide important information about our building and community. It advises upcoming social events and it holds copies of all EC and AGM minutes since day one, together with other official and casual documents. There is a password required for viewing owner related documents - just ask the Building Manager. The Site Administrator would welcome content ideas for the site.

**Scan to view the website**

