

# NEWSLETTER

July 2023



Welcome to the Winter edition of the NewActon South newsletter.

Since our last [newsletter](#), there have been a large number of new owners and tenants joining us in the building, so I would like to start by welcoming you all to the NewActon South community.

The Owners' Corporation Executive Committee members have been working hard to progress key projects to completion. This has not been without some difficulty and delay as obtaining quotes for works and tradespeople to undertake the jobs remains a challenge for us, our body corporate manager Canberra Strata, and the wider community. It is also fair to say that the cost of goods and services has substantially increased over the last year. We can also anticipate an increasing need to maintain, service and repair our building as it is now over 12 years old, and some plant and equipment are reaching the end of their serviceable lives. This will also be a consideration in balancing the budget in coming years.

Although the weather can be gloomy this time of year and we are past the shortest day, the precinct remains full of life. The Palace Cinema seems to have stronger patronage than ever, and we wait with bated breath to see what will open in the former ILY (Morning Glory) restaurant space behind Peppers Hotel. Hopefully it will be a fabulous venue that will be a staple for the NewActon community to support and gather.

Kym Hemming  
NAS EC Chair

## SOCIAL AND COMMUNITY EVENTS

Our monthly Happy Hour (and a half) continues to be popular, and it's good to see some of our new residents attending. Everyone is welcome to join in. Make a diary note for the last Wednesday of each month from 6:00 to 7:30 pm. An end of year function is also being planned, so keep an eye out for further information on this as we approach November.



# KEY PROJECT UPDATES:

## CONCRETE SLAB CRACKS

A major item we're pursuing at present is repairing the cracks in the concrete slabs within the building to stop water damage to apartments, hallways, vehicles and storage cages. This work is now well underway and is nearing completion.

## FOOTPATH CLEANING

Cleaning of the public footpath outside the refuse room's external door that is next to the garage will be undertaken shortly. We also will make sure that this area is attended to regularly to clean rubbish spills and other soiling.

## GARAGE DOOR

You might have noticed that the garage roller door operation was a bit louder than usual. We have been waiting on parts to fix this, but it has now been repaired.

Please do not activate the manual door-opening override switch unless in an emergency. If the manual override has been used, please advise the Building Manager or Canberra Strata without delay as the door will remain open - and pose a security risk - until reset.

## SKIP BIN

Another skip bin will be ordered later this year to 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. This skip day seems to turn into a "trash and treasure" situation where many people's trash is recycled and put to good use by other members of our community.





## WINDOW CLEAN

Our next building-wide window clean has been deferred for the time being because we're now in winter, with rain and dust soiling the windows on top of the grime that has gradually built up. We also want to plan for a more extensive clean of our windows (beyond a "squeegee wipe clean") given the earthworks and construction dust arising from the current works in West Basin and alongside Commonwealth Avenue and London Circuit. This more extensive cleaning work will come at an additional cost that was not anticipated in this year's budget, but will be high on the agenda for next year's budget period that starts this November.



## NOTIFICATION FORM

A new notification form has been uploaded to the [NewActon South website](#) under the 'documents' tab to help residents report issues such as routine maintenance and other matters that require attention within our building. The form is also available by scanning the QR code below or from Jackie, our Building Manager. You are encouraged to use this form to assist Canberra Strata in managing your report. Urgent maintenance items should continue to be reported to Canberra Strata on (02) 6295 6888.

## NEW OWNERS' PORTAL

Canberra Strata will shortly introduce a new owners' portal that will include your levy notices and payments, body corporate documents and financials, and a "works order" request for maintenance. Canberra Strata will alert you when the portal is online, with instructions how to register and an introductory video. The EC has also devised a Notification Form for raising issues that are not necessarily maintenance related (cleaning, noise, nuisance etc) and this will also be available on the new Portal as well as our website and from the Building Manager.

## SECURITY

On a positive note, there has been a dramatic decrease in security incidents and thefts over the past year. We still ask everyone to remain vigilant and report any suspicious behaviour to the Building Manager, Canberra Strata or a member of the Executive Committee.



## ELECTRIC VEHICLE SUB-COMMITTEE

The Electric Vehicle (EV) Sub-Committee has completed its EV survey of owners and residents, and the summarised results have been placed on the [NewActon South website](#). We are awaiting a quote for installation of the necessary infrastructure and once we have this, we will be able to advise you all of options for moving forward with this important project

## LIFT UPGRADES

We had planned to start an upgrade of the lift doors this current financial year. However, the current uncertainty about replacing the aluminum and cedar cladding, and the likely expenditure required to support this, has prompted us to defer the lift project until next year. Our lift contractors do not foresee any issue with this and will continue to undertake routine maintenance.





## **STORM DAMAGE AND CLADDING**

A complex issue that remains a work in progress is the damage resulting from the 2020 hailstorm and finalising our insurance claim. Our insurance company has appointed a consultant to assess the extent of the damage to our building's aluminium and metal facade and cedar cladding, and to project-manage the required remediation work.

The assessments undertaken so far indicate that the cladding no longer complies with the updated National Construction Code regarding fire ratings and flammable materials. It should therefore be replaced with compliant alternatives. The Owners' Corporation was reassured some years ago that the cladding was compliant, which it was at the time, but the standards have since changed in light of apartment fires in the UK and Victoria and other advances in building materials.

Further work is to be undertaken to validate this assessment, establish the extent of non-compliance, and to determine the extent and cost of the remediation required, which will also include consultation with the building's architects regarding any proposed replacement materials. Our current understanding is that replacing the aluminium cladding will be the first priority. The cedar cladding has been identified as a lower-priority risk but must be replaced in the future.

Our insurance payout will be limited to replacing the storm-damaged cladding. The cost of replacing the balance of any other non-compliant cladding will be the responsibility of the Owners' Corporation.

Once these investigations have been undertaken and results finalised, an information session will be held for owners to discuss the required course(s) of action. A later General Meeting will be convened to approve the remedial work should the work plan and costs not be available for the Annual General Meeting that will be held on 15 November.

You may have noticed that New Acton East is currently in the process of replacing its wooden features and we will need to follow suit at some point.

## RECENT INITIATIVES:

### NEW SIGNS

New illustrative signs have been placed at the building's entry and exit points and on level 4 to remind people of the pet and smoking policies in NewActon South. Bikes and scooters must also not be brought through the main foyer. Please enter or exit through the garage door and use the basement or level 1 lifts.



### BIKE STORAGE AUDIT

The bike storage audit is now complete. Many discarded bicycles have now been removed and given to charity. This has freed up many additional bicycle storage racks in the carpark and bike storage room.

### 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.





# TIPS AND 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. (Turning off the cold and hot water)

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 12 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.

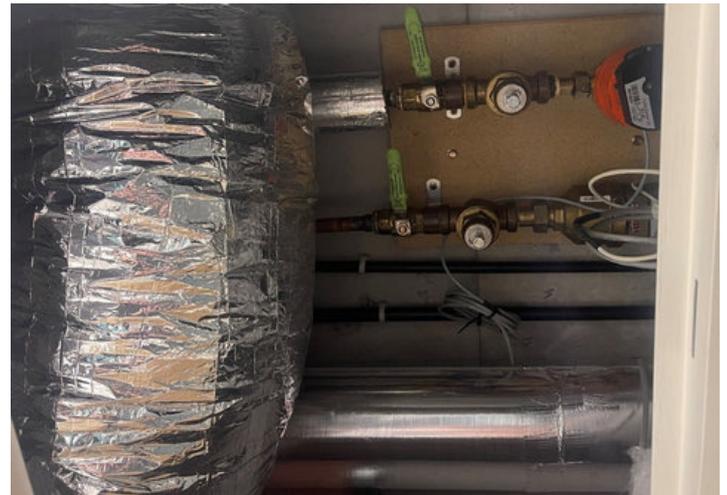
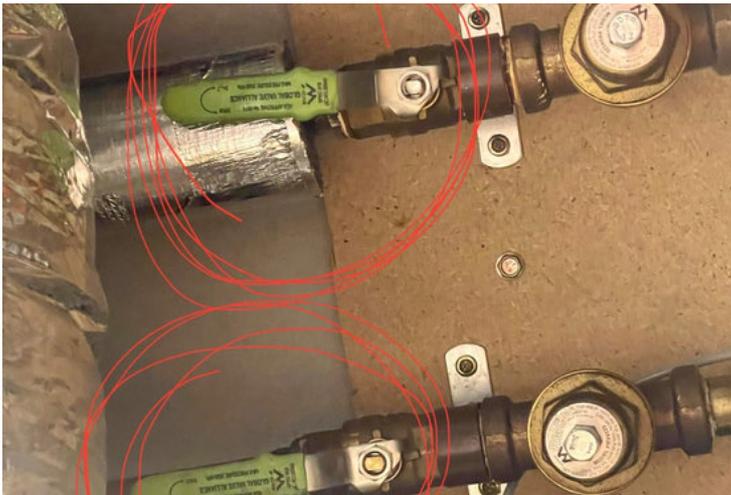
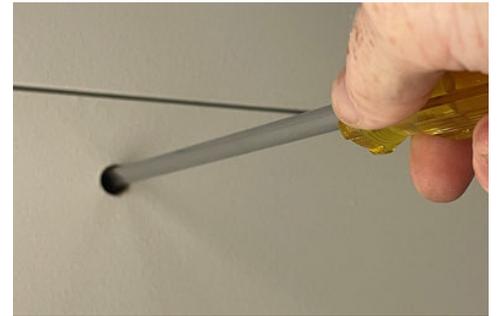
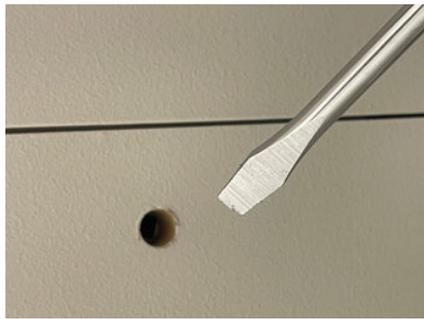
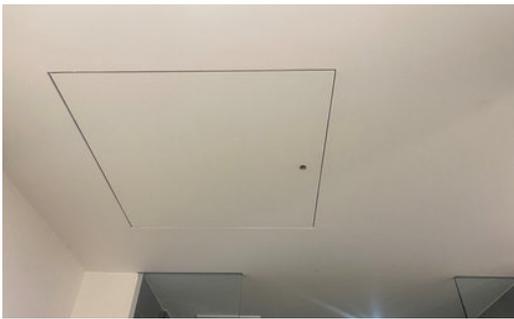


## HATCH KEY:

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 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.



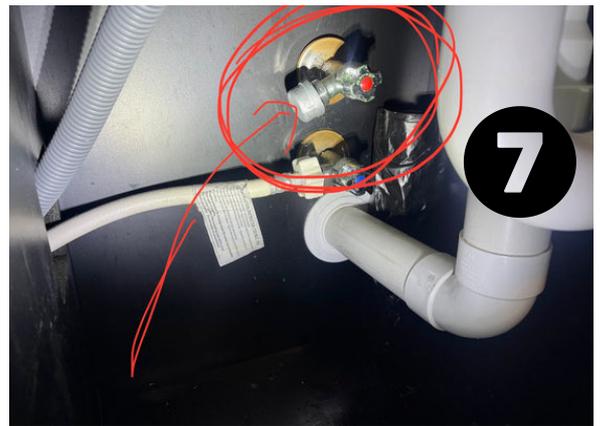
## FRIDGE PLUMBING

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.



## 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).



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 (Figure 7)

## 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/>



Therefore, as per previous advice, ensure you:

- 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 Canberra Strata with best contact details to reach you in case of an emergency or if access is required to your apartment.
- 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 Canberra Strata to ensure you receive community notices.**

### Best place to keep informed:

You will soon see these QR codes on the community noticeboards.

Scan the QR code with your mobile device and it will take you to the NewActon South web page that has all the relevant news and information regarding the building including:

- Upcoming events
- House Rules
- Newsletters, etc
- Body corporate minutes
- Contact numbers



[newactonsouth.com.au](http://newactonsouth.com.au)