



ACSL
Australian College of Strata Lawyers

21st Annual ACSL Strata Law Conference



Thursday 12 and Friday 13 March 2026

The Windsor Melbourne, 111 Spring Street
Melbourne, Victoria, Australia

Two Days. One Vision. Shaping Strata for Tomorrow



ACSL
Australian College of Strata Lawyers



See more at:

<https://acsl.net.au/conference-2026-registration>

Members, Colleagues and strata industry guests are invited to the premier strata law conference in 2026. It is an opportunity to hear of the developments, forecasts, and research in this increasingly specialised area of Strata Law.

The program is full of insightful sessions which are inspiring and a catalyst for future endeavours.

Michael Kleinschmidt

ACSL Fellow

ACSL President

The 21st Annual ACSL Strata Law Conference will be held at The Windsor Hotel on Thursday 12 and Friday 13 March 2026. This year's program has been carefully curated to inspire, educate, and showcase a diversity of perspectives and expertise from across the legal profession. Over two days, delegates will enjoy 16 thought-provoking sessions delivered by esteemed speakers, offering valuable insights, opportunities for professional growth, and the chance to connect and exchange ideas with peers - all designed to add lasting value to your practice.

Amanda Farmer

ACSL Fellow

ACSL Vice-President

ACSL Conference Chair 2026

2026 ACSL Conference Committee

• **Amanda Farmer**
Lawyers Chambers
NSW (Chair)

• **Michael Allen**
Bugden Allen
Group Legal NSW

• **Allison Benson**
Kerin Benson
Lawyers NSW

• **Thomas Gibbons**
Thomas Gibbons
Law NZ

• **Ian McKnight**
Strata Advisory
Services NSW

• **Pino Monaco**
GV Lawyers WA

• **Vicki Toan**
Glaister Ennor NZ

Day One

Thursday 12 March 2026

Session	Time	Topic	Presenter
	9.00 am	Welcome	Michael Kleinschmidt <i>ACSL Fellow, ACSL President</i> Bugden Allen Group Legal, QLD
		Annual General Meeting	
Session 1	9.30 am	Lessons to be learned from recent cases involving water and other defects in strata property Her Honour Judge Kirton will examine recent cases of relevance to everyone affected by water flows and other defects in strata property, such as Davies & Anor v Owners Corporation 1 PS414649K [2019] VCAT 1159 and subsequent decisions. Her Honour will focus on what went wrong, why the dispute took so long to resolve, and what strata lawyers can, and should do, to better manage disputes, costs, and strategy. She will also explain the overlapping jurisdictions between VCAT and the courts, and how that is being managed.	Her Honour Judge Kirton Judge in Charge of the Building Cases List, County Court of Victoria Vice President, Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal
	10.30 am	Morning Tea	
Session 2	11.00 am	CPD Session Drafting Better - Motion and Rule/Bylaw Drafting Master Class A practical session working through what to look for when drafting, reviewing, and advising on the wording of motions and resolutions, rules and bylaws across all jurisdictions. As lawyers, we know the difference a well-crafted, carefully worded statute, regulation, contract, clause, or letter can make in ensuring completion or compliance, and avoiding disputes. The same is true for resolutions and rules or bylaws. If you have ever spent minutes, hours, or even days agonising over the wording of a sentence or paragraph, this session will set out the fundamentals of good plain (or plainer) English drafting you can come back to when it really matters.	Vicki Toan <i>ACSL Member</i> Toan Law, NZ
Session 3	12.00 pm	Strata Title Obligations and Dispute Resolution – can equity assist Do elements of equity law inform or apply to “strata participants” and if so, what is the extent of its application to “strata relationships”. If equity law does apply, what is the extent of that application? For example fiduciary duties, unconscionable conduct, unjust enrichment or statutory codification in the Australian Consumer Law. If equity law does not apply; why not.	John Park <i>ACSL Member</i> Dentons Australia Limited, WA
Session 4	12.40 pm	The Victorian Legislative Review: a vision quest of opportunities lost One quarter of a century ago the Subdivision Act was castigated thus: “The interpretation of key provisions of that legislation is a particularly difficult task as it is one of the most poorly drafted Acts it has been my misfortune to confront”. The Owners Corporations Act, its immoderate, intemperate cousin, has been chastised and birched 16 times in its 17 years of childhood. Turning 18 on New Years’ Eve, it’s prescient to reflect: have we learnt anything or is this just another whimsical frolic of wasted youth?	Tim Graham <i>ACSL Fellow, Immediate Past President</i> Aitken Partners, VIC
	1.20 pm	Lunch Break	

Day One

Thursday 12 March 2026

Session	Time	Topic	Presenter
Session 5	2.00 pm	The rise of sovereign citizens What is a sovereign citizen? The types of sovereign citizens, and examples of how a sovereign citizen can disrupt the governance of a strata scheme.	Nancy Torry <i>ACSL Member</i> Bugden Allen Group Legal, NSW
Session 6	2.40 pm	CPD Session Conflict of interest	Michael Allen <i>ACSL Fellow, Life Member</i> Bugden Allen Group Legal, NSW Mark Atkinson <i>ACSL Fellow</i> Atkinson Legal, WA Anthony Wilkinson <i>ACSL Member</i> Pelham Strata Lawyers, VIC Emeritus Professor Bill Duncan <i>ACSL Academic Member</i> QLD
	3.40 pm	Afternoon Tea	
Session 7	3.50 pm	CPD Session Practice Management in the Age of AI: Tools, Risks, and Real-World Use Cases Artificial intelligence is rapidly reshaping professional services - and specialist legal practices are no exception. In this practical and forward-looking session, Amanda Farmer will share how she is using AI in her own strata law practice to improve efficiency, enhance client service, support fixed-fee pricing, and reduce friction in day-to-day legal work. Joined by legal tech founder Samuel Junghenn, the discussion will explore real-world use cases, ethical and confidentiality considerations, supervision obligations, and what lawyers should expect in the next three years.	Amanda Farmer <i>ACSL Fellow, ACSL Vice-President</i> Lawyers Chambers, NSW Samuel Junghenn <i>CEO, AI Legal Assistant</i>
Session 8	4.50 pm	The Regulation of Families with Children in Apartments Condominium housing is now ubiquitous in contemporary cities globally. For residents, the success of compact cities depends on built environment quality, social relationships within buildings, and broader social norms. This includes how private and shared apartment spaces are navigated, regulated, and controlled. This article focuses on the experiences of families with children who comprise a growing cohort of apartment residents. We build on existing research that documents families' experiences of poor design, to recognize the role regulation plays in shaping a sense of home. We theorize regulation at three levels: (1) social regulation as interactions between individuals who influence each other's behaviour; (2) self-regulated behaviours; and (3) institutional regulation through rules and laws. Utilizing narratives of parents raising children in apartments in Sydney, Australia, we argue social norms, neighbourly interactions, and by-laws interact to enforce codes of behaviour that impinge upon family life. Our insights have important implications for the wellbeing and inclusion of families within compact city agendas	Dr Hazel Easthope <i>ACSL Academic Member</i> University of New South Wales
	5.30 pm	Conference session concludes for Thursday	
	7.00 pm	Antara Restaurant	128 Exhibition St, Melbourne VIC 3000

Day Two

Friday 13 March 2026

Session	Time	Topic	Presenter
Session 9	9.00 am	Termination, Collective Sale, and Remedies of Last Resort Termination and collective sale of strata schemes has been an important issue across jurisdictions. In New Zealand, there are specific nuances, as termination of unit title arrangements have taken two key divergent paths: collective sale in some cases, and conversion to fee simple titles in others. This short paper will focus on key issues arising from recent New Zealand termination and collective sale cases, including how the interests of different owners are balanced. In addition, the paper will highlight the sliding scale of how New Zealand Courts have approached what they describe as remedies of “last resort” in the context of unit titles, with concerning implications for unit owners and their ongoing interests. Takeaways: This paper will provide attendees with understanding of key recent termination cases in New Zealand, how the Courts weigh up different interests, and how they approach termination. This will provide useful comparative insights for those in other jurisdictions. A written paper will be provided.	Thomas Gibbons ACSL Fellow Gibbons Law, NZ
Session 10	9.40 am	Investigating Sustainability Infrastructure in Intentional Strata Title & Community Title Schemes In Australia one in ten people live in a strata title scheme, in NSW that figure is 17%. Climate change and the increasing cost of energy is changing how we are using our residential building stock leading to increased interest in implementing sustainability infrastructure such as solar panels. My research considers the implementation and use of sustainability infrastructure in ecological or sustainability focused intentional strata and community title communities and considers what lessons can be applied from these communities to assist strata and community title schemes retrofit their existing building stock, to identify legal barriers to the uptake of sustainability infrastructure and provide reform recommendations.	Allison Benson ACSL Fellow Kerin Benson Lawyers, NSW
	10.20 am	Morning Tea	
Session 11	10.45 am	Derivative Actions for Body Corporate Owners The recent judgment of <i>Kennedy v Body Corporate 82981</i> opens the possibility for minority Body Corporate owners to take derivative actions on behalf of Bodies Corporate in New Zealand, as an exception to the <i>Foss v Harbottle</i> rule allowing majority rule. This was previously not allowed as per <i>Singh v Boutique BC</i> . Our presentation will analyse the impacts of Kennedy and what it means for Bodies Corporate, owners and Committee Members, particularly in situations where Committee Members breach their duties to act in the best interests of their Body Corporate, fail in their statutory duties, and breach their duties to use their power for a proper purpose.	Joanna Pidgeon ACSL Member Pidgeon Law, NZ Ben Thomson ACSL Member Pidgeon Law, NZ
Session 12	11.25 am	Have the reforms in NSW hit their mark? Reforms to the NSW strata legislation are proceeding in tranches, but there are concerns that the Government may be taking a lowest common denominator approach, that some important issues are simply being avoided and that some of the reforms are actually counterproductive. This session will take a cool, calm look at the reforms.	David D. Knoll AM ACSL Fellow Barrister at Law and Adjunct Associate Professor, UNSW
Session 13	12.05 pm	Jurisdiction updates - NSW	Tom Yeoman ACSL Member Yeoman Legal, NSW
	12.25 pm	Lunch Break	

Day Two

Friday 13 March 2026

Session	Time	Topic	Presenter
Session 14	1.30 pm	Strata Title Common Property Valuation The valuation of strata common property raises practical challenges, particularly where conventional market forces are absent or distorted. This session explores the variety of approaches to the valuation of common property in NSW strata schemes, drawing on valuation practice, case law and real-world dispute scenarios. It examines when common property has value, how that value is assessed, and why valuation evidence so often becomes contentious in strata matters. The presentation provides practical insights for strata lawyers instructing valuers or dealing with common property transactions and disputes.	Darren M. Keen Keen Property Pty Ltd, NSW
Session 15	2.10 pm	Addressing Pervasive Conflicts of Interest in Strata Management: Research Findings and Discussion The presentation is based on a report that investigated systemic conflicts of interest within the Australian strata management industry. Findings revealed that conflicts of interest are deeply embedded in the industry's business models, particularly through insurance commission dependencies, developer consulting arrangements, vertical integration with affiliated entities, staff remuneration structures tied to additional service fees, and supplier referral relationships. The report concludes that only robust regulatory reform, supported by industry leadership and consumer education, can restore integrity and trust in the strata management industry.	Dr Nicole Johnston Strata Knowledge, QLD
Session 16	2.50 pm	Unpaid Levies: Compassion, Costs and Consequences Unpaid levies are a fact of life in every strata jurisdiction, but are we getting the balance right? In this powerful closing session, we go beyond process and procedure to confront the human and systemic impact of levy recovery, sparked by fresh national research into forced bankruptcy and the role strata debt plays in personal financial collapse. With perspectives from NSW, Vic, WA and NZ, alongside frontline insights from Financial Counselling Australia, this panel will tackle the hard questions: Are costs the real accelerant? Is aggressive recovery sound practice, or systemic harm? How do we distinguish hardship from strategic non-payment? And have we, as lawyers, helped design a system that needs reform? Expect robust debate, uncomfortable truths, and practical takeaways on what must change, and what cannot. If you care about fairness, proportionality, and the future of levy recovery, this is the session you cannot afford to miss.	Commentator Amanda Farmer <i>ACSL Fellow</i> Lawyers Chambers, NSW Nancy Torry <i>ACSL Member</i> Bugden Allen Group Legal, NSW Fabienne Loncar <i>ACSL Member</i> Chambers Russell Lawyers, VIC Mark Atkinson <i>ACSL Fellow</i> Atkinson Legal, WA Clinton Baker <i>ACSL Member</i> Price Baker Berridge, NZ Lody Stewart Financial Counselling Australia
	3.50 pm		
	3.55 pm	End with Afternoon Tea	

About the Conference

THE VENUE

The Windsor Hotel, 111 Spring Street, Melbourne, Victoria, Australia

Accommodation – Delegates book their own accommodation

Booking Link: <https://shorturl.at/raN7L>

THE COLLEGE (ACSL)

Australian College of Strata Lawyers (ACSL), established in 2005, is an association to promote high standards and a system of specialist accreditation for lawyers skilled in the practice of strata and community titles. Representing all stakeholders in the area including owners, occupiers, owners corporations, community associations, managing agents, consent authorities, developers, financiers and building managers.

ABOUT THE CONFERENCE

The Conference Committee has worked hard to ensure that expert speakers will share valuable insights into experiences within the Strata sector, and delegates will gain new inspiration, new learnings into the latest industry trends, best practices and added value to your practice.

WHO SHOULD ATTEND?

If you are interested and involved in Strata Law and the way it is changing and evolving, you will not want to miss this opportunity to be part of the commentary and discussion on the current state of knowledge and related issues in this field.

REGISTRATION DESK

The conference registration desk will be in operation prior to the commencement of the conference and throughout the day on Thursday and Friday.

FEES INCLUDE

- Attendance at all working sessions
- Conference materials, including any available speakers' papers submitted to ACSL
- Tea and coffee breaks
- Lunch on Thursday and Friday
- Thursday evening dinner

CONFIRMATION

Confirmation of your registration will be forwarded to you by email.

EARNING CPD POINTS

Attending the ACSL Conference is also a valuable way to earn CPD points. You can earn self-assessed 1 point per hour of education for each State and Territory CPD programs. New Zealand Lawyers – Self-assessment applies. There are three compulsory sessions included in the program for 2026.

CONFERENCE EVALUATION

A conference evaluation form will be provided to assist ACSL with planning future conference. Please complete the form and return it to the registration desk prior to your departure.

CANCELLATION POLICY

An administration fee of \$500.00 per registrant will apply for cancellations before 9 February 2026. No refunds will be payable for cancellations made after this date.

- Please note that registrations are transferable

DRESS

Smart casual is appropriate for conference sessions. A light jacket may be required in air-conditioned seminar rooms and for the cooler weather. Smart casual is also appropriate for the conference dinner.

DIETARY REQUIREMENTS

If you have any special dietary requirements, please note these on your registration form when registering and follow up with the dinner venue on the evening.

INSURANCE

Conference registrations fees do not include insurance or cover for loss or personal injury. There is no insurance provided by the conference organiser. Delegates should arrange their own personal and travel insurance.

The 21st Annual ACSL Strata Law Conference 2026

Registration Details

Please complete the Registration Form and return to
ACSL Conference Manager
E: conference@acsl.net.au

For online registration
<https://acsl.net.au/conference-2026-registration>

(Transaction fees apply)

DELEGATE INFORMATION

Registrant - please use block letters with black ink to avoid illegibility

Title: _____ Given Name: _____ Surname: _____

Firm Name if applicable: _____

Preferred Name label: _____

Email Address: _____

Telephone Number: _____

Special Requirements: *Please indicate any special needs (including dietary, allergies, medical, other)* _____

ACCOMPANYING GUEST:

Registrant - please use block letters with black ink to avoid illegibility

Title: _____ Given Name: _____ Surname: _____

Special Requirements: *Please indicate any special needs (including dietary, allergies, medical, other)* _____

Registration Details

REGISTRATION DETAILS – FOR DELEGATES ONLY

Full Registration fee for delegates provides: Two-day registration includes where applicable:

Thursday - morning tea, afternoon tea and lunch and conference Dinner.

Friday – morning and afternoon tea, lunch and closing refreshments.

Registration inclusive of GST and inclusive of social events	Fees	Qty.	Total
Early Bird Member Delegate (payment on or before 30 January 2026)	AUD \$1900.00		
Full Member Delegate Registration (payment after 30 January 2026)	AUD \$2240.00		
Academic Members	AUD \$907.50		
Associate Members	AUD \$825.00		
Non-Member Academic	AUD \$925.00		
Non-Member Registration (Early Bird) (payment before 30 January 2026)	AUD \$2700.00		
Non-Member Registration (payment after 30 January 2026)	AUD \$2850.00		

*** For multiple registrations please contact the ACSL Conference Manager – conference@acsl.net.au

REGISTRATION DETAILS FOR – ACCOMPANYING PERSONS THURSDAY NIGHT DINNER

Accompanying Person Registration ONLY	Fees	Qty.	Total
Social Events for ACCOMPANYING PERSONS Registration (For delegates, this item is included in the registration above. This is for accompanying persons only)			
Thursday Dinner	AUD \$350.00		

PAYMENT DETAILS

Online Registration

<https://acsl.net.au/conference-2026-registration>

Credit card payments attract a **transaction fee**

DIRECT DEPOSIT DETAILS

Bank: National Australia Bank BSB: 084-004

Account Number: 59 984 6415

* Reference your payment: Conference +
(Surname of Delegate)

**This form constitutes an Invoice upon
Receipt of payment.**

ABN Number 81 931 647 242