

CHU



2025 Strata Index

October 2025



A note from our CEO



Kimberley Jonsson
CEO, CHU

Strata living creates a unique sense of community, grounded in shared spaces and shared responsibility. Bringing that community to life depends on people coming together — through their committees, tradespeople and strata professionals — to strengthen where they live. At CHU, we believe strata managers, brokers and insurance providers all have a vital role in supporting and safeguarding these communities.

To help these professionals better understand owners and residents of strata we have established the CHU Strata Index. To us, this index is much more than a metric. It's a living reflection of what's happening in strata today — the challenges, priorities, and aspirations of the people who live and own within these buildings.

Our first annual Strata Index highlights a clear opportunity for strata professionals — including insurance providers, managers, and brokers — to take on a new mindset: that of an educator. When we help decision-makers better understand how to maintain, protect, and strengthen their buildings, we help entire communities thrive.

Education has real, measurable impact — improving maintenance, compliance, safety, and coverage. It's one of the most powerful ways we can all contribute to building resilience and trust.

Like strata itself, this index is a living conversation. Every decision you make, every action you take, contributes to the strength of your community and, in turn, shapes the index for years to come.

At CHU, we don't see our role as simply providing insurance - we see it as strengthening strata communities as a whole. As we look ahead to our 50th anniversary in 2028, our commitment remains clear: to support strata to be a vibrant, safe, and sustainable way of living for generations to come.

I hope you enjoy reading the Strata Index and find insights that inspire action. I look forward to continuing this conversation with each of you.

Thanks,

Kim

The CHU Strata Index

Strata living is built on trust, collaboration, and shared responsibility. At the heart of most well-run strata communities, there is a network of strata professionals who help to keep things functioning smoothly, including strata managers, insurance brokers, building specialists, and others.

At CHU we know that these communities thrive when strata works well.

That's why CHU is dedicated to understanding strata living. This report explores the perceptions, priorities, and behaviours of 1,000 lot owners across Australia who are actively involved in their body corporate.

This research was conducted to provide a deeper understanding of the people who live and own in strata, and what works for them. We wanted to build a resource that everyone can benefit from by understanding what lot owners think about:

- How their properties are managed
- Where they feel supported, and where do they look for support
- The factors and influences that shape their attitudes and decisions
- How professionals who support them help build more confident, resilient, and well-protected strata communities

It focuses on how they feel about the upkeep of their buildings, the role of strata managers, and how insurance fits into the picture. It also reveals areas of strength and moments of doubt, highlighting opportunities for strata professionals to respond to these challenges.

Our goal with this research is to give a voice to people living and owning in strata, to understand where there may be gaps in knowledge and understanding and provide insights into how bodies corporate approach and apply the expert help that's available to them.

The research demonstrates the areas of pressing need for strata professionals today, and provides a call to action for the sector to focus on:

- **Education:** Strata professionals to provide clear guidance on maintenance, insurance, and clarity as to the role they play.
- **Resilience:** Support owners to understand what a resilient community looks like, and how this protects the long-term value of their lots.
- **Collaboration:** Focus on proactive, visible support that builds trust and confidence, with practical support for communities.

This research reflects CHU's long-standing commitment to strata. For over 45 years, CHU has worked alongside the industry as a partner, not just a provider. While we pioneered strata underwriting in Australia, this research represents our commitment to listening to and learning from the people who own and live in strata — and doing everything we can to help them, as well as all strata professionals, make strata a great place to live.

We hope you find this report useful and that it sparks ideas and actions that contribute to a stronger future for strata communities.

Methodology

This research was conducted by the independent research agency Fuller, on behalf of CHU Group. It was designed to provide strata professionals with deeper insights into how owners perceive and experience strata living.

The findings are based on a national online survey of 1,000 strata lot owners who are involved in the management of their body corporate. The sample was recruited from an independent, external panel that is representative of the broader Australian population. The sample was carefully selected to represent a broad cross-section of strata schemes across Australia, encompassing both strata-managed and self-managed properties, as well as a range of lot sizes, property values, and locations.

Fieldwork was conducted between 5 and 19 December 2024, via an external research panel.

Format:	Online survey
Duration:	15 minutes
Panel:	External, independent panel
Sample Base:	Lot owners involved in the management of their body corporate.
Fieldwork:	5th December – 19th December 2024
Sample Size:	n=1000

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Chapter One

Supporting building resilience: Attitudes to property maintenance

For most homeowners, their property is their most significant asset, making long-term protection essential to their financial security.

Maintenance is critical to protecting the long-term value of this significant asset. However, our research shows that most owners are unsatisfied with their building’s maintenance.

Surprisingly, having a strata manager does not appear to influence perceptions of property maintenance, with strata-managed properties just as likely to be seen as poorly maintained as those that are self-managed.

This suggests that lot owners are not connecting maintenance outcomes with the role of their strata manager. This demonstrates the opportunities for strata managers to better communicate the impact they have on property upkeep, creating long-term resilience and protecting the value of the buildings they manage.

As strata living becomes more common and building stock ages, strata professionals will play an increasingly important role in encouraging maintenance investment by linking the role of maintenance to the long-term value protection this provides.

Perceived property maintenance

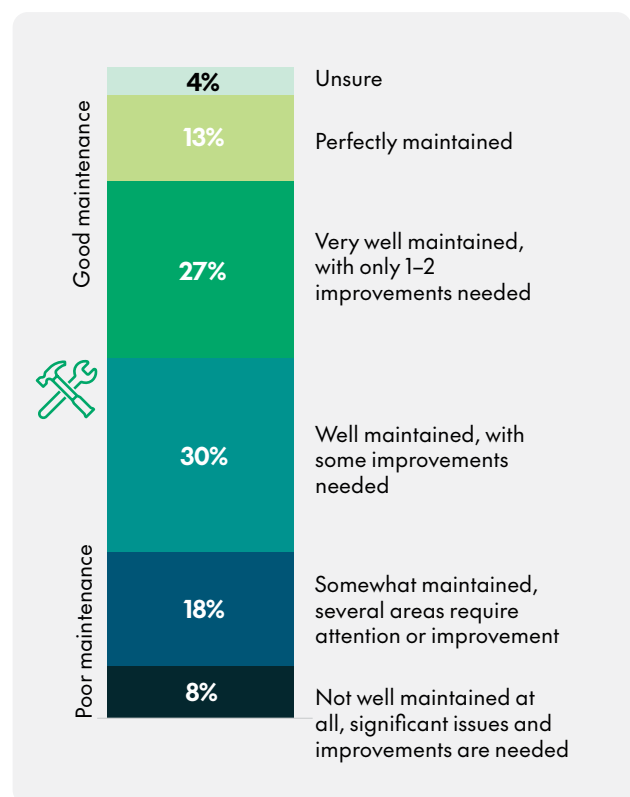
We asked lot owners about their perceptions on property maintenance; their responses demonstrate that the majority of lot owners see opportunities for improvement in their maintenance.

This highlights the need for strata professionals, both in management and brokerage, to play a stronger role in educating on the importance of effective strata

maintenance and linking this to long-term value protection.

Smaller lots are also more likely to report dissatisfaction with maintenance, and less likely to use strata professionals, highlighting the key role of professionals in maintenance action plans that address these concerns.

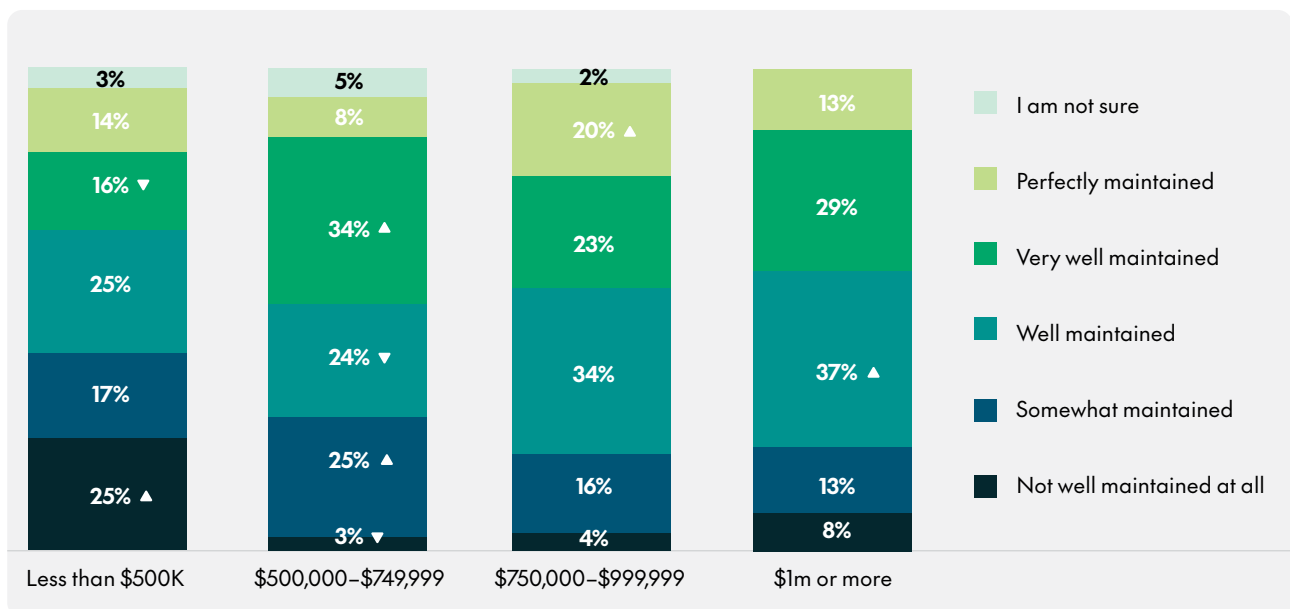
Figure 1.1: Perceptions of property maintenance



Property value appears to have a marked impact on investment in property maintenance, with lower value lots more likely to be in a state of poor maintenance. One in four properties worth less than \$500,000 are not well maintained at all, compared to 8% of the total, suggesting that lower-value properties need more support with maintenance knowledge and practices.

This may create opportunities for strata professionals to support with the management of smaller value properties, where their impact will be larger by comparison to other lot values.

Figure 1.2: Property maintenance by property value



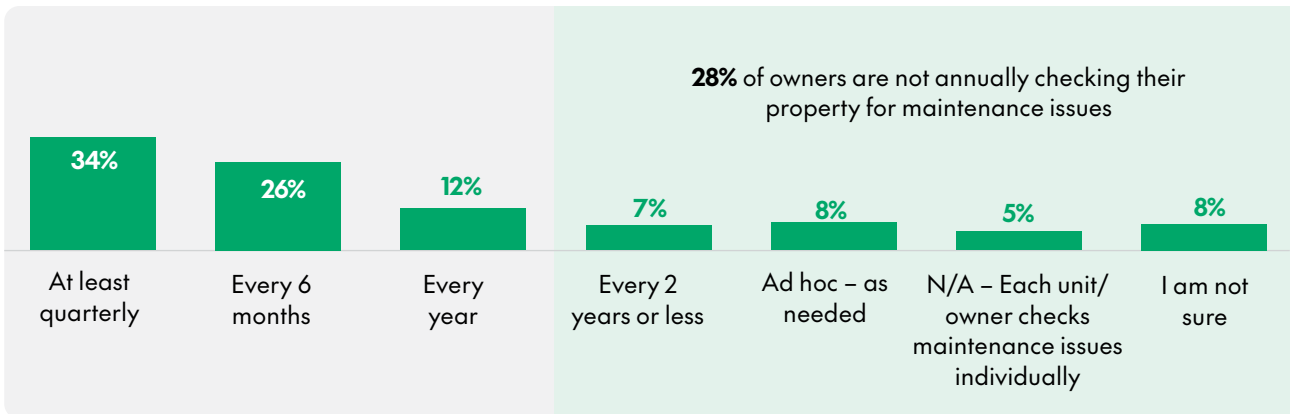
All respondents: n=1,000

Property maintenance behaviours

While perceptions can vary widely, data around property maintenance behaviours can shine a more accurate light on what is happening. A majority of lot owners report that their property is regularly inspected for maintenance issues, with 34% stating that checks are conducted at least quarterly, 26% every six months, and 12% yearly. (See Figure 1.3) However, this means that 28% of properties are being checked irregularly, if at all.

There is a clear opportunity for strata managers to provide education on the role of maintenance checks and how they sustain healthy strata communities. CHU provides resources to support strata managers in this educator role.

Figure 1.3: Frequency of property maintenance checks

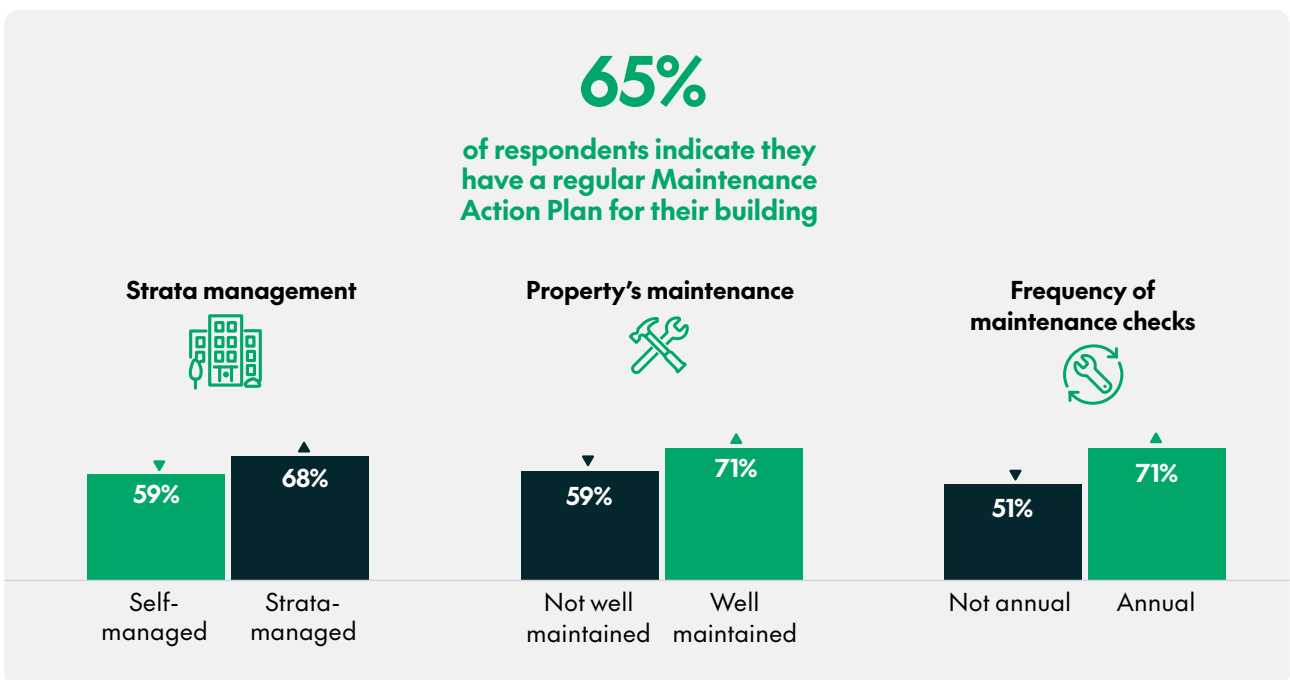


Maintenance Action Plans

Maintenance Action Plans are legally required in the ACT and are best practice for strata properties. Our research shows that owners understand that Maintenance Action Plans link to more-frequent maintenance checks and better-maintained properties.

Importantly, strata-managed properties are also more likely to have Maintenance Action Plans, indicating that these plans are a clear opportunity for strata managers to articulate the difference they make to strata properties.

Figure 1.4: Presence of Maintenance Action Plans

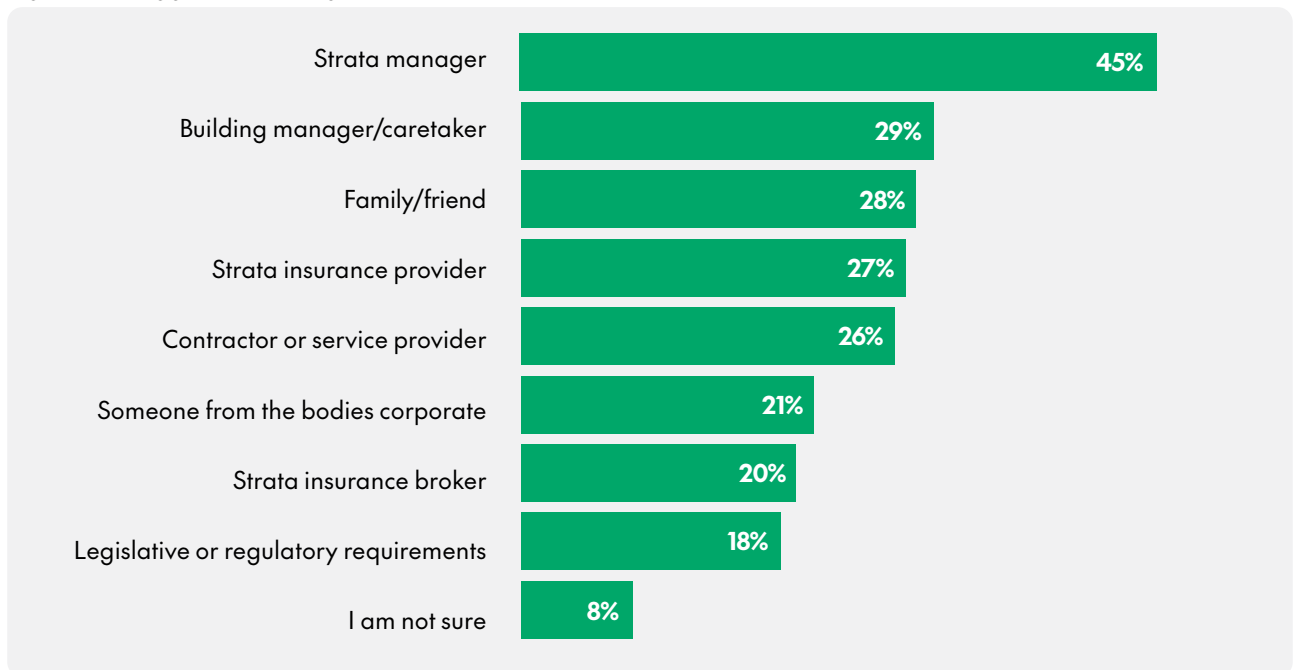


All respondents: n=1,000

For properties with no Maintenance Action Plan, it is essential to note that this data represents claimed behaviour only, and that there is a considerable difference between having a plan and actually carrying out the necessary maintenance tasks. At CHU, we see firsthand the benefits strata managers can provide in ensuring the Maintenance Action Plan is more than just a plan.

This normalisation of maintenance is a valuable first step in the process and a meaningful way for strata managers to support the properties they manage. And this appears to be the case for many, with 45% citing their strata manager as the trigger for implementing a Maintenance Action Plan, again highlighting the value that strata managers can deliver. (See Figure 1.5)

Figure 1.5: Triggers for having a Maintenance Action Plan



All respondents: n=1,000

What does this mean for strata professionals?



Finding:

There is a range of views on whether properties are well maintained, with smaller schemes and lower value properties more likely to be seen as poorly maintained. Having a strata manager doesn't appear to make a difference.



Implication:

Strata managers have a role to play in sharing regular updates on emerging maintenance trends to highlight the role that effective management can play in building maintenance that protects strata communities.

Finding:

Over a quarter of lot owners say that their strata is not regularly checked for maintenance, and this is similar across all types of schemes and properties, even strata managed.



Implication:

Lot owners would benefit from simple tools that reinforce importance of regular maintenance checks, and CHU has provided strata managers with useful checklists that can be used to help start the conversation.

Finding:

Only two in three owners claim to have a formal Maintenance Action Plan for their building, and this is lower for self-managed schemes, properties perceived as less well-maintained, and properties that do not undergo regular maintenance checks.



Implication:

Maintenance Action Plans can often be perceived as an administrative exercise – but they are clearly linked to better maintenance overall. Strata managers should use the Maintenance Action Plan to articulate the difference they make to strata properties.

Chapter Two

Empowering strata communities: Attitudes to strata management

Strata management is central to the governance, maintenance, and experience of owners, and we were able to gain unique insights into how the profession is viewed by lot owners.

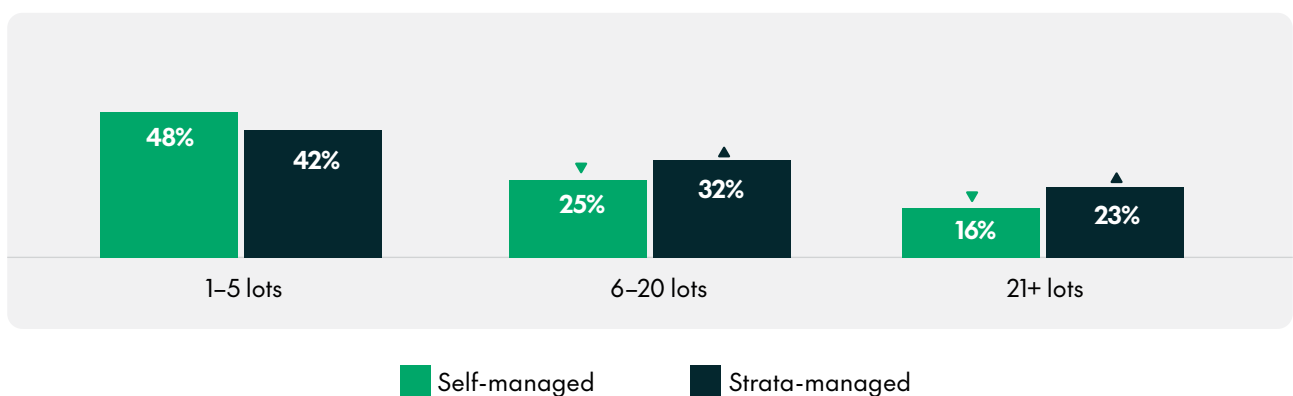
Of our sample, two-thirds, or 65%, are in a property managed by a strata manager, while the remaining 35% are self-managed.

Usage of strata management

Unsurprisingly, smaller strata schemes, with fewer than five lots, are more likely to be self-managed, while larger schemes are more likely to use strata managers. (See Figure 2.1)

The difference is starker when examining property values, with the lowest-valued properties being significantly less likely to be strata-managed.

Figure 2.1: Usage of strata managers by lot size, property value, and location



Perceptions of the role of strata managers

There is significant variation in a lot owner’s perception of the role and value of strata managers, and variation in how strata managers are seen across different aspects of their role.

This identifies a clear opportunity to better explain not only what strata managers do, but also how their contribution is communicated to, and understood by owners.

Making property management easier

While managing strata can be complex and time-consuming, views are mixed about whether strata managers ease the burden.

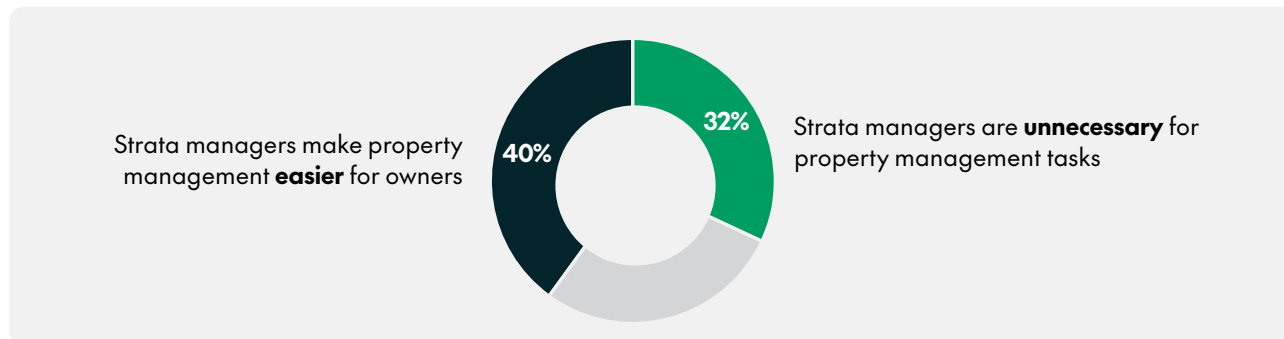
Our research identified three clear perspectives on strata managers.

The largest (40% of respondents) are supporters, who agree that strata managers make property management easier.

The second largest group (32%) are detractors, who believe that strata managers are unnecessary for property management tasks. A significant group (28%) are undecided, neither agreeing nor disagreeing that strata managers make property management easier.

Strata managers should focus their attention on the undecided group, through demonstrating the benefits of Maintenance Action Plans, and using educational resources to proactively warn of emerging maintenance issues.

Figure 2.2: Do strata managers make property management easier by size and strata manager usage?



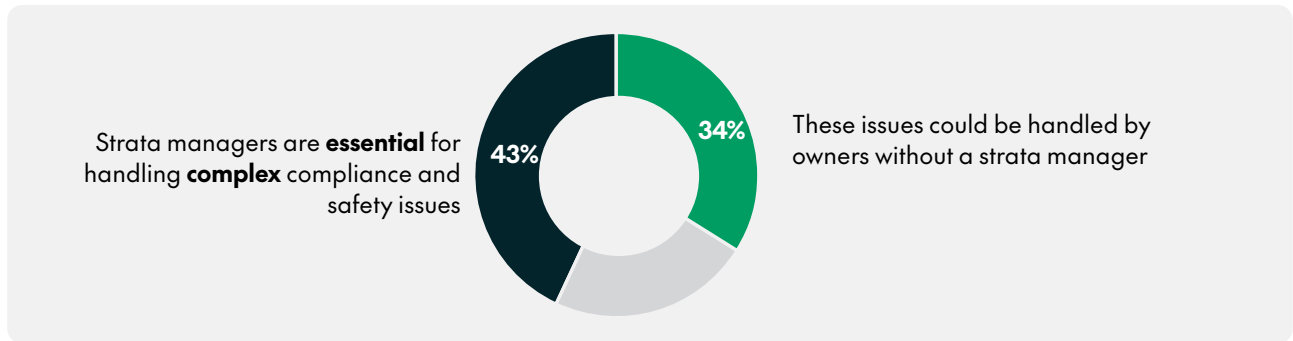
Compliance and safety partners

Our research shows that many lot owners lack an understanding of the structured role that strata managers play as partners in delivering a compliant – and safe – community to live in.

There is an opportunity for strata managers to educate lot owners, particularly in smaller schemes, about the role they play in compliance and safety outcomes. While compliance can seem to lot owners like a ‘box ticking’ exercise, adhering to regulations, creating by-laws that address emerging risks and reducing long-term liabilities are all clear benefits of compliance for owners.

Strata managers can take a vocal role in promoting safety — ensuring it remains a standing agenda item at every committee meeting and linking its benefits to the wellbeing of the community. CHU provides a range of checklists on emerging issues to support these conversations.

Figure 2.3: Are strata managers essential for complex compliance and safety issues by size and strata manager usage?



Acting in the best interests of owners

While strata managers are often relied upon to act on behalf of owners, perceptions of their intent are divided.

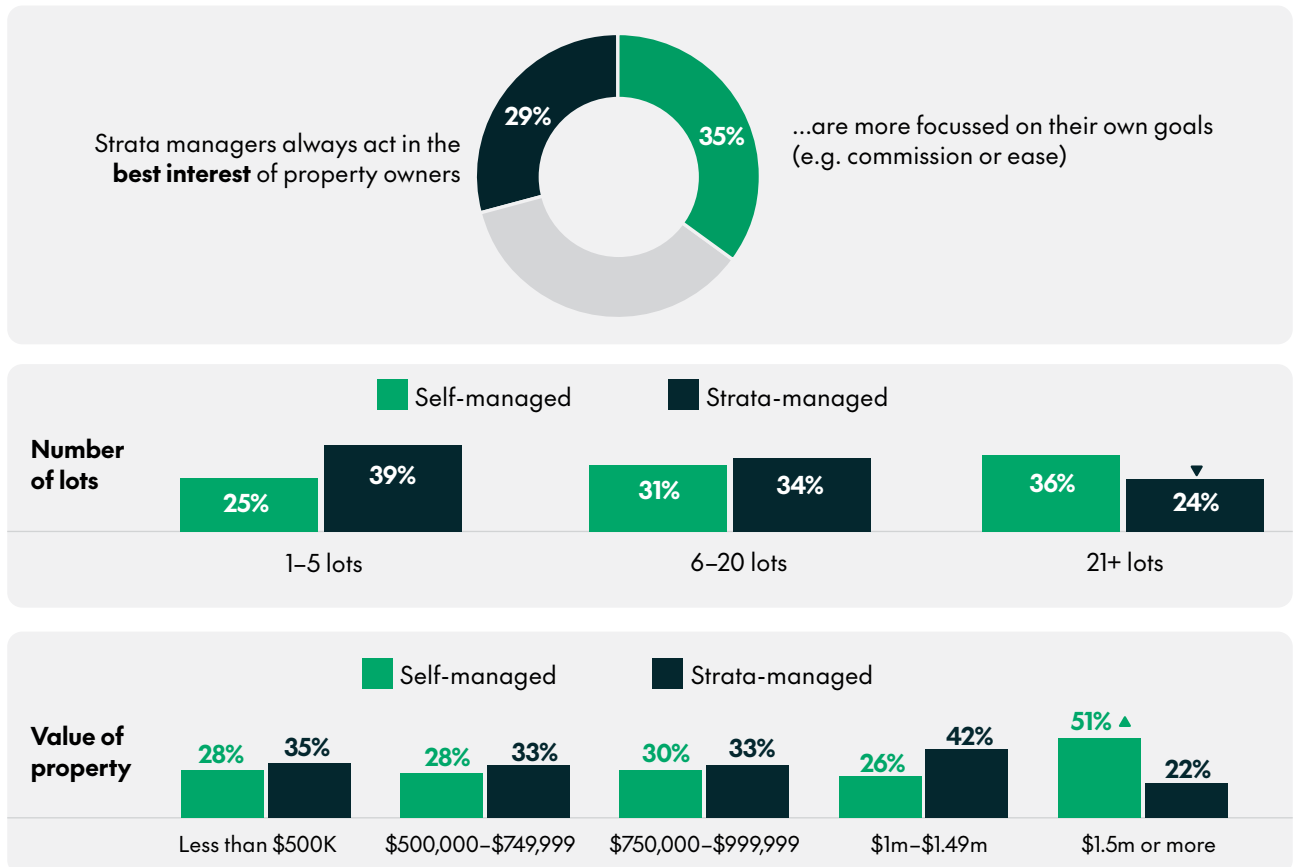
Just 29% of lot owners agree that “strata managers always act in the best interests of property owners”, while 35% believe they are “more focused on their own goals, such as commission or ease”, and 36% are unsure. (See Figure 2.4) This attitude is stronger among those in smaller schemes, where 39% believe managers prioritise their own interests, compared to only 24% in larger schemes.

Views also shift with property value. Negative sentiment peaks at 42% for properties worth \$1 million to \$1.49 million but drops to 22% for properties valued at \$1.5 million or more.

These concerning statistics demonstrate the opportunity for strata managers to clearly demonstrate their commitment to acting ethically and in the owner’s best interests. Ongoing regulatory developments that will reduce conflicted remuneration will benefit all strata managers, and it is important that the industry publicly supports the ongoing professionalisation of the industry.

Many of the opportunities to address this misperception can be easily addressed through other suggestions in this section.

Figure 2.4: Do strata managers act in property owners' best interests by size and strata manager usage?



Value for money

Perceptions of value for money continue to be a challenge for strata managers. While 30% of lot owners agree that “strata managers provide good value for money”, a larger proportion (40%) believe that “strata manager fees are too high for the value received”, and 30% are neutral.

This concern is highest among owners in medium-sized schemes, where 43% say fees are too high, compared to 40% in smaller schemes and 28% in larger ones. Strata managers, particularly those in the mid-market, need to clearly demonstrate value for money and communicate the benefits they provide.

Increasingly, the benefit for lot owners will be demonstrated through shifting the role of the strata manager to not just a manager – but an educator and a partner in ensuring a resilient community through resource delivery and strategic support.

Reasons to work with strata managers

There are many reasons why strata schemes may choose to use a strata manager.

Regulatory concerns top the list, with 50% saying they work with a strata manager because they ensure regulatory / safety measures. (See Figure 2.5) Saving time, coordination amongst owners, and expertise are also significant factors in choosing to work with strata managers.

These factors should be prominent in business development conversations, and in marketing and advertising for strata managers, to support the need and value of the profession.

Figure 2.5: Drivers of strata-management use



Strata-managed respondents: n=654

Strata management satisfaction by property management perceptions

To gain a deeper understanding of what drives satisfaction, respondents were asked to write, in their own words, why they were either satisfied or dissatisfied. Key themes amongst those who were dissatisfied included high fees and having strata managers who are slow, ineffective and inactive. In their own words:

“ I’ve noticed strata managers still want an increase every year in fees

“ The strata manager is slow to respond to maintenance requests and there’s a lack of transparency in how funds are allocated for repairs and improvements

“ Small issues, big issues, it doesn’t matter. Nothing gets done

“ We pay too much for what they do

Too expensive when no maintenance is provided ”

It’s so hard to get anything done ”

They seem ineffective and acting without reference to the Owners Corporation ”

Pretty much useless. Have to be pushed into action ”

Unless you make a fuss, nothing happens ”

Conversely, those who are satisfied tend to talk about their strata managers being proactive, with excellent communication and well-maintained properties:

“ They seem honest and committed

“ They actively seek feedback from owners

“ Strata managers make property management easier for owners, strata managers are effective in managing repair and maintenance

“ It is well managed and we are informed of everything that needs to be done

Despite the very high fees, they do provide guidance through difficult decisions ”

They are proactive in preventing issues ”

He is always attending to any issues, keeps us informed, does his job well, especially when we are not there ”

They always make sure the property looks great ”

Barriers to strata management usage

Our research shows that perceptions of those lot owners choosing not to use a strata manager are relatively passive or cost driven.

More overtly negative reasons, such as having had a negative experience or being sceptical about strata managers’ interests, rank much lower, suggesting that the choice not to use a strata manager is driven more by lack of understanding than outright rejection. This presents a substantial opportunity to educate lot owners and to ensure that the benefits of strata managers are widely known.

Figure 2.6: Barriers to strata-management use



What does this mean for strata professionals?



Finding:

One in three strata schemes is self-managed, and this is more prevalent among smaller lot sizes and less valuable properties, whereas larger lots are far more likely to have a positive view of strata managers.



Implication:

The biggest opportunity for growth for strata managers lies in smaller lots, particularly in helping them understand how strata managers can manage maintenance, complexity, and make their lives easier.

Finding:

Over half of strata-managed lot owners report being satisfied with their strata managers, particularly those who have collaborative relationships and believe their property is well-maintained.



Implication:

Strong communications and a focus on maintenance are core to building satisfaction with lot owners, and effective strata managers increasingly see their role as educators – not just service providers.

Finding:

The main reasons to not use strata managers are passive – lot owners simply don't understand the benefits of strata managers and therefore can't see why they should pay the fees.



Implication:

Strata managers who develop a strong narrative that can help owners understand the benefits they bring to their clients will win an outsized share of the market.

Chapter Three

Strengthening strata: Attitudes to strata insurance

Appropriate strata insurance cover is critical to protect shared properties and create more resilient communities, yet it remains one of the least understood aspects of strata ownership.

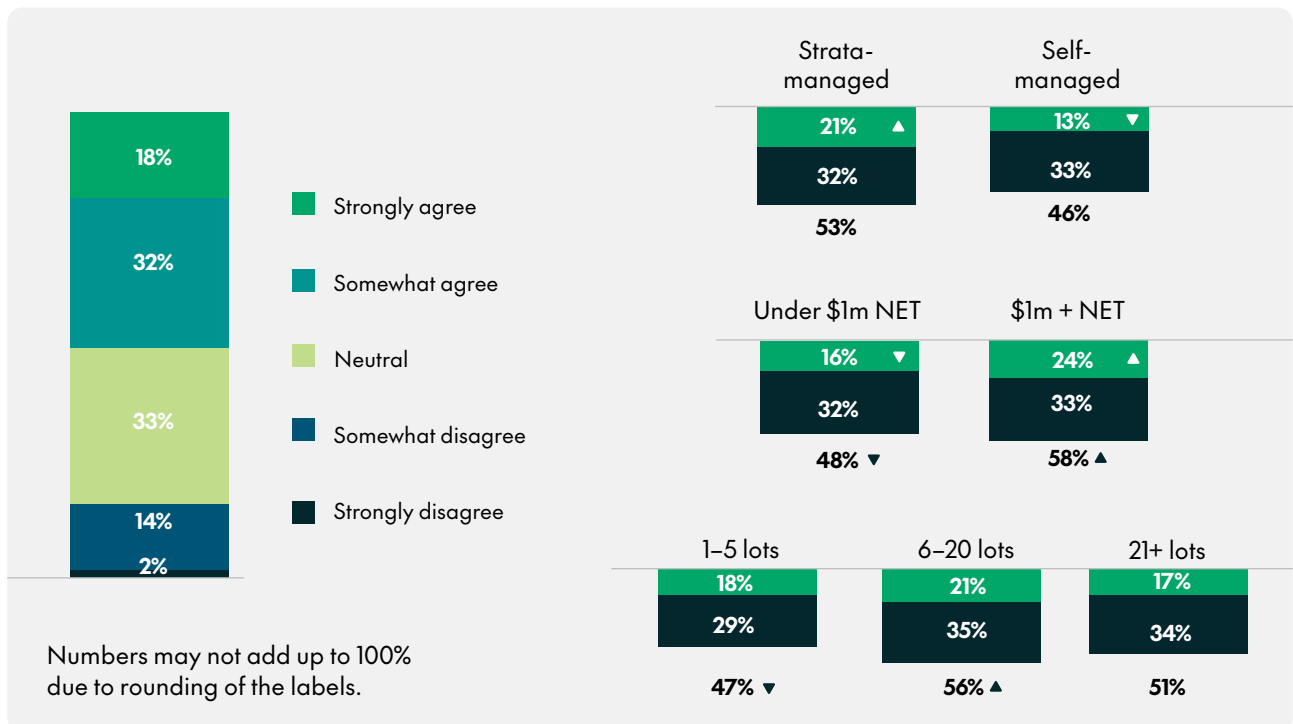
Our research shows an opportunity for strata managers and insurance brokers to educate, build trust, guide decision-making, and enhance outcomes for lot owners.

A complex and important topic

Our research into lot owners' appreciation of the complexity of strata insurance shows that the majority believe that strata insurance is complex, and this demonstrates a clear opportunity for strata managers and brokers to help educate and partner with lot owners to achieve the best possible outcomes.

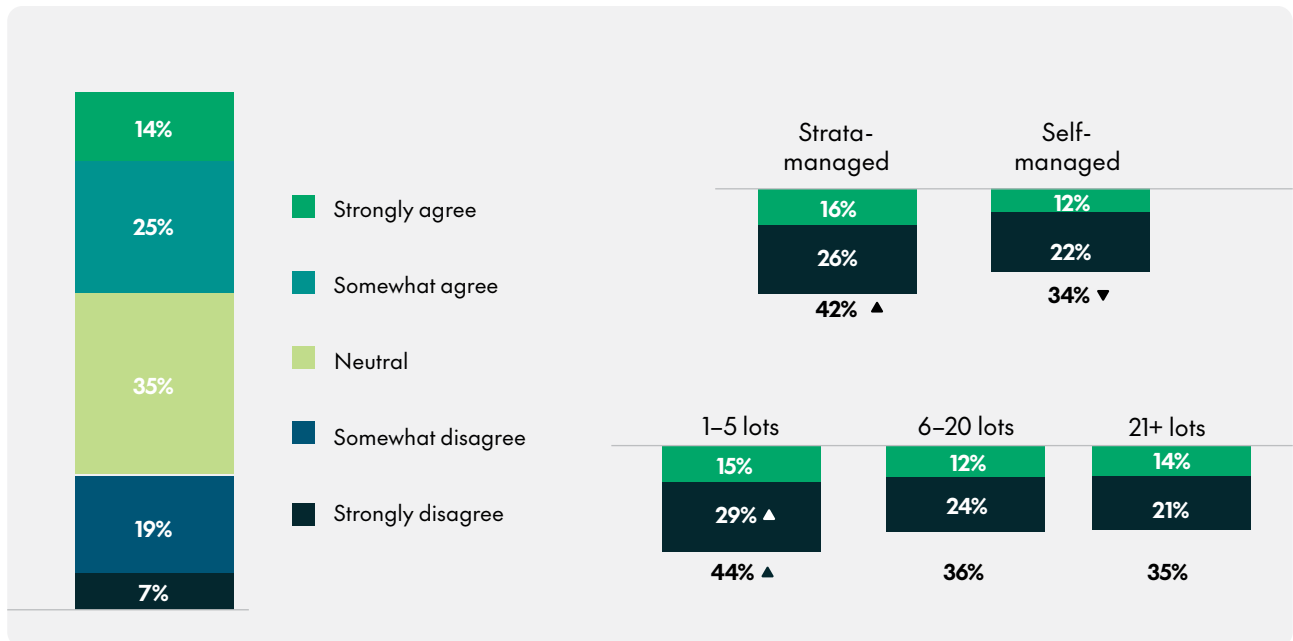
However, it's concerning that some lot owners don't appreciate the complexity, and potential pitfalls of underinsurance or policies that don't provide appropriate protection.

Figure 3.1: "Strata insurance is complex"



We also examined attitudes towards the appropriate level of coverage with 39% of respondents only wanting the bare minimum. This preference toward underinsurance reflects a lack of understanding of the role that strata insurance plays in protecting resilient communities.

Figure 3.2: “I want the bare minimum strata insurance”



Both of these factors, combined (a lack of appreciation for the complexity of strata insurance and a desire for the bare minimum of insurance), point strongly to strata insurance being a grudge purchase for many owners. The challenge for the industry is to help lot owners understand the importance of having appropriate insurance coverage, the risks of getting it wrong, and the benefits of appropriately protecting their community.

Purchasing strata insurance

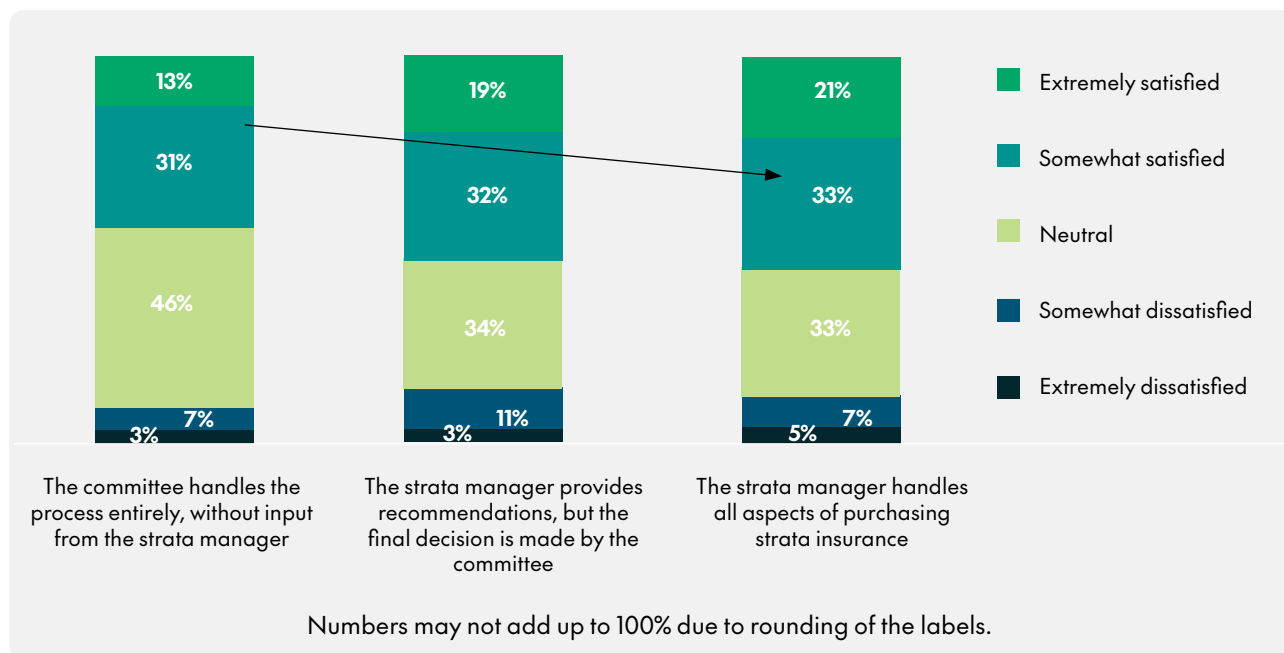
Those who live in strata-managed schemes tend to see insurance procurement as a key role for strata managers, and while strata managers cannot provide insurance advice, it is important to note that many lot owners view their strata managers as knowledgeable about insurance.

Fewer than 10% of these owners handle insurance entirely on their own, while 40% say that their strata manager handles all aspects of the insurance. A further 44% say that they work together with their strata manager.

Strata manager involvement in insurance purchase is viewed positively by lot owners. Respondents whose strata manager handles the full insurance purchase process are more likely to report feeling extremely satisfied with their strata manager.

Specifically, 54% of those whose strata managers handle all insurance are satisfied, compared to 44% of those who handle insurance themselves. (See Figure 3.3)

Figure 3.3: Strata manager involvement in insurance purchase by satisfaction with the strata manager



The process of purchasing strata insurance often involves collaboration between strata managers and insurance brokers; however, many owners are unclear about the respective roles of these two parties.

While most respondents are aware that their strata manager is involved, fewer understand how insurance is actually arranged.

For example, 36% believe their strata manager is purchasing insurance directly from an insurer, while only 11% realise that their manager may be working with a broker. Another 22% say their committee handles the process directly, and 15% believe the committee works with a broker.

Notably, 17% of owners are unsure how their insurance is purchased.

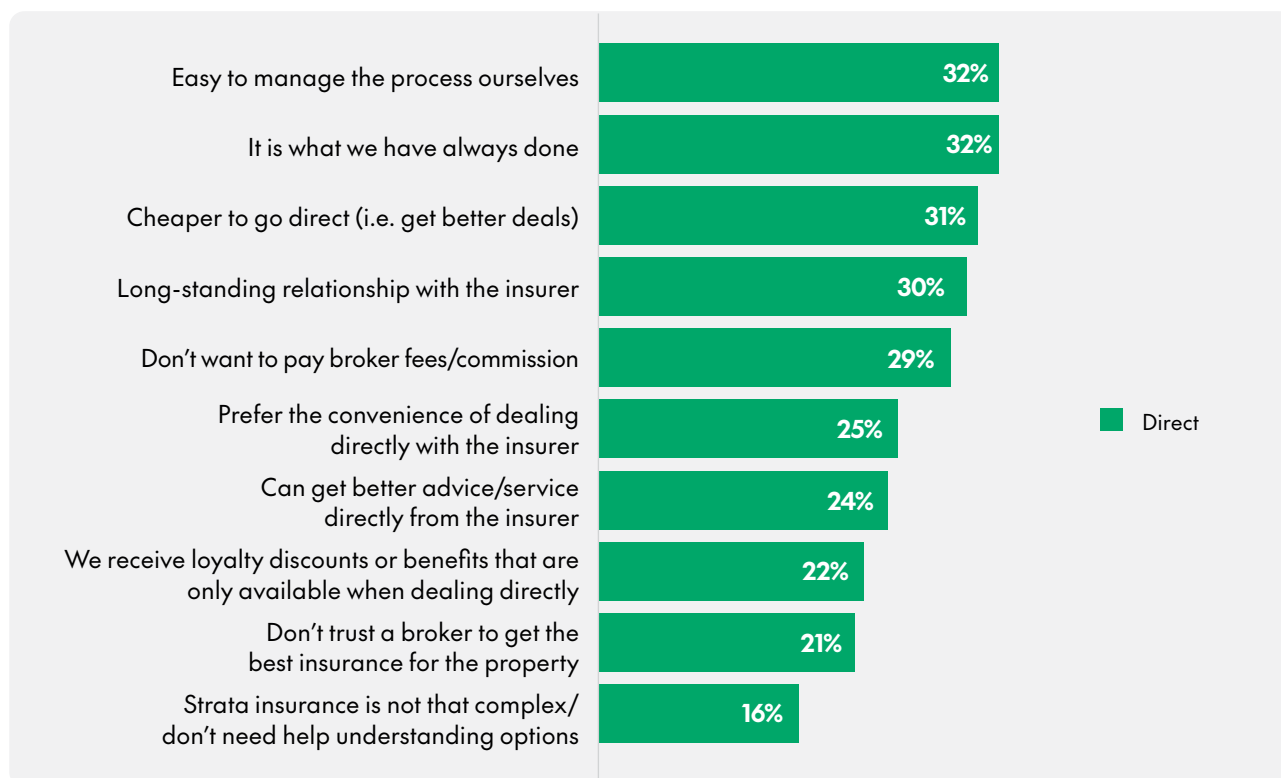
These findings indicate a lack of transparency and awareness about the roles that strata managers and brokers play. This creates a clear opportunity for strata managers to proactively engage with lot owners to communicate their role and educate lot owners on the benefits of using specialised brokers.

Reasons for purchasing insurance directly

Not every committee will use a broker, with some choosing to purchase insurance directly.

There’s a variety of reasons for choosing to purchase directly, but most reasons are relatively passive and focused on expedience rather than conscious decision-making. Ease, habit, and price are the main reasons, while factors such as a lack of trust in insurance brokers play a limited role. (See Figure 3.4)

Figure 3.4: Reasons for direct purchase



Reasons for broker usage

Brokers are effectively positioning themselves as service providers who reduce administration and paperwork for lot owners.

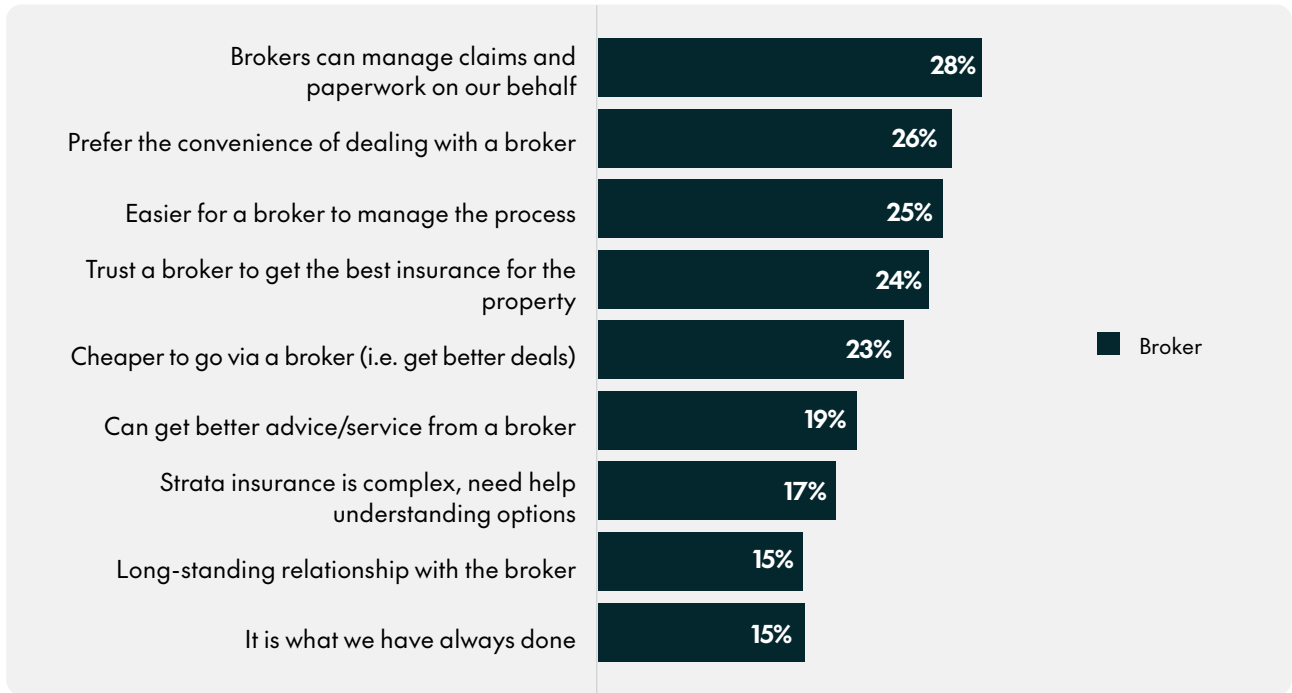
Managing paperwork and claims, convenience and ease are the top three reasons cited for choosing to purchase through a broker, while price also plays a role. (See Figure 3.5)

Notably, reasons such as better advice and needing help with the complexity of strata insurance play a much smaller role, with fewer than one in five nominating these as reasons to use a broker.

This suggests an opportunity for brokers to help lot owners understand the broader benefits of using a professional insurance broker. While convenience is a strong selling point – brokers provide access to a broader range of products, help to navigate a complex market, and provide additional expertise beyond managing paperwork.

Our research also highlights a knowledge gap, with owners being unaware of the likelihood of experiencing certain types of claims – a knowledge gap that a skilled broker will help to close.

Figure 3.5: Why do you purchase insurance via a broker?



What does this mean for strata professionals?



Finding:

Strata insurance isn't well understood, and many lot owners don't appreciate its complexity and the importance of ensuring appropriate details are reviewed and covered.



Implication:

Lot owners will often underinsure without understanding the implications. Strata managers can play a role in educating owners, helping them make decisions that reflect the complexity and importance of strata insurance.

Finding:

The role of brokers and strata managers in strata insurance is also not well understood. However, the involvement of strata managers in insurance tends to lead to higher satisfaction.



Implication:

Insurance has the potential to be a means for strata managers to demonstrate their expertise and value to strata owners.

Continue the conversation



The CHU Strata Index is designed to spark action — to turn insight into impact.

Every strata professional has an opportunity to help owners make decisions that best protect people, property, and value.

To help, we've created a suite of practical guides and checklists to support education and action across your communities. These include:

- **Maintenance Action Plan resources** to guide proactive property care
- **Safety and compliance resources** such as our Lithium Battery Checklist

You can download these resources and more at

chu.com.au/2025chustrataindex

Together, we can help make strata not just a way of living — but a way of living everyone wants to be a part of.

