



What is common property - and why does it matter?

One of the most common points of confusion in strata living is working out where your property ends and common property begins.

It's worth getting your head around - because it determines who is responsible for what, and what you can and can't do without approval.

Your lot is the space defined in your strata plan. In most cases, it's the interior of your unit - the air space within your walls, floor and ceiling. It may also include an exclusive use area like a car space or storage cage.

Common property is everything else. It belongs to all the owners in your building, collectively. That includes:

- The building's exterior walls, roof and foundations
- Foyers, stairwells, lifts and corridors
- Gardens, car parks and driveways
- Shared pipes, wiring and services
- In most cases, balconies and windows

Why does this matter? Because the Owners Corporation is responsible for maintaining common property, funded by all owners through their levies. If your roof leaks or your lift breaks down, it's the Owners Corporation that organises and pays for the repair - not you individually.

It also means you can't alter common property without approval. Adding a structure to your balcony, changing your windows or installing a satellite dish on an external wall all need the Owners Corporation's sign-off first.

When everyone understands where the boundaries are, buildings run more smoothly, disputes are less common, and the whole community benefits. Well-maintained common property is something we all share - and it protects the value of every lot in the building.

Not sure where your lot ends and common property begins? Ask your strata manager for a copy of your strata plan. It's the legal document that maps it all out.

For more information about common property in your state, visit our website.