



PLANT AN IDEA

Any keen gardeners who know how to make pot plants flourish?

An afternoon gathering where they can provide tips & tricks is a fun way to create a good community.

PIZZA SWAP

A favourite food, easily ordered, can be a topic for conversation.

Bring along a favourite – swap a slice... relaxed, easy.

Even better, make your own for others to try!

FACT SHEET

WHY ARE SOME PLACES NICER TO LIVE?

FRIENDLY NEIGHBOURS, GOOD LIVING

Simple things to do

Say 'hi' to neighbours. This makes it easier to approach them if you would like to ask a question. It's also good for security.

Learn from others to make life easier and keep up with changes.

Create an online group for quick questions.

Meet for a regular juice / coffee / tea. These catch-ups motivate and remind everyone of good ideas.

The people who live around you can make life easier

There are lots of existing community groups – choose ideas to suit you and your neighbours. Keep it easy by using programs tried in other suburbs: [Meet Your Neighbours](#)

Take a walk to local strata complexes. Some may have dealt with issues you are encountering for the first time and can tell you how they solved them.

Getting together to exchange information or recommendations saves you the task of sifting through information.

It's also a great way to welcome new residents. For those who have not lived in strata, this generosity is appreciated.

Learn on the go

Tenant or owner? Either way, you can contribute to the well-being of your community.

Learn helpful hints, shortcuts and life hacks at free webinars, hosted by your local Council and social media groups.



SETTING A GOOD EXAMPLE

Engagement, patience and knowledge can make living in a Strata very enjoyable.

Co-operating with neighbours on small tasks prepares you to handle larger issues.

It also improves emergency preparedness.

For ideas and templates, look at programs in other areas, as well as your local region:

[Meet Your Neighbours](#)

Examples of co-operation

Solving problems is achieved more easily and some issues simply don't arise when good communication happens.

If residents try to be informed and factual when approaching the strata committee or Building Manager, they can avoid frustration and anger, which is often due to misunderstanding rules / obligations.

Arcadia Apartments, Alexandria, 24 terraces + 128 apartments

A lot of problems can be prevented just by having conversations. But talking to strangers is difficult.

Solution?

Create areas and occasions where neighbours can chat easily.

Arcadia tends the green areas and rooftop BBQ well - including a veggie garden and a rooftop chicken coop.

The Building Manager is efficient and helpful in resident service.

Erko Apartments, Erskineville, 262 apartments

Creating a common hobby between neighbours is not hard – a little time all through the year is all that's needed.

Starting small, Erko now has many community and sustainability activities. They ask for cooperation in a friendly way and keep all signs positive, thankful and helpful.

Providing drop-off points for recycling food, clothing and 'tricky' items (those not suitable for Council bins) has resulted in residents swapping tips and helping each other.

This has extended to book clubs, charitable Christmas hampers, and local help groups assisting vulnerable people.

Top of the Town, Darlinghurst, 97 apartments

Residents made a decision to change staff to ensure they were community minded. A good Building Manager can openly discuss problems and suggest practical solutions.

Showing new residents around and letting them know basic rules of parking, recycling, etc can start them off the right way.

Understanding that everyone works together creates cooperation and good behaviour.



INFORMAL TALKS

Owners and renters should talk to the Strata Committee members & develop a good relationship.

The Committee may be able to help with issues, or you can volunteer some time to assist.

Working groups for recycling, clothing donations, gardening or home maintenance are an easy way to keep in touch.

Everyone participates according to their time or interest.

Example of resolving a problem

A resident continually let his dog in to a common area where it was not permitted.

Attempts to talk, polite notes and approaches over many months did not work. It was then discovered that the resident had a first language in common with our Strata Manager and one other resident and we found out that he spoke English quite well, but Australian phrasing seemed offensive.

Discussions in his favoured language resulted in changed behaviour and the Building Manager followed up to ensure a continued good relationship.

We saved a relationship and the cost of going to the NSW Tribunal (NCAT).

Prevent problems before they are expensive

Remember to thank and look after the cleaner/s. They see everything and can help spot maintenance problems.

A resident chatting with our cleaning supervisor learned about a slow leak. It was found that the leak was linked to a water storage tank and investigations would take some weeks.

Early detection prevented a safety hazard and expenses were minimised, due to being alerted before the damage increased.

Conversations alerted us to NSW regulation about AGM

In a small block of units, the owners are busy professionals and trades people with little time to focus on Administration.

A retired resident noticed that the levies were not issued as required by NSW law.

Her conversation with a Committee member was followed with a check of the Meeting Minutes and the Strata Manager was found to have not correctly administered the annual budget.

Upon checking invoices, overcharges were also discovered.

The result was a change of Strata Manager, significant yearly savings and much more professional management.

All residents can contribute time.

**Look for ways to help – everyone can do a little...
altogether it makes a big difference!**



TIDY BINS & SERVICE AREAS

Group bins by colour, with rubbish bins nearest the entry to bin rooms. Place large matching signs above.

Promote gifting of furniture online, to help keep service areas clear of big items.

A RELAXED APPROACH

Better to have lots of people recycling imperfectly than very few doing it 'just right'.

Little mistakes can be easily overcome with a friendly note or chat. Check your signs – old? Too many? Confusing?

FACT SHEET

RESOURCE RECOVERY & WASTE OUTPUT

RECYCLING – DO GOOD, FEEL-GOOD!

Start with the basics, learn from results & keep improving

Even a small group of people can influence recycling volume. Talk to as many residents as possible & mention that recycling reduces mess & costs. Be sure to say you appreciate the help.

Best way to reduce the amount of wrong items? A casual conversation or friendly note is all that's needed – remember to be kind & thank residents for their efforts.

Positive messages get results. People react best when thanked for participating / recycling carefully.

Service areas – organised, clean, well-lit

Bins which are clean encourage good behaviour. Organise a working bee or external bin cleaning company.

Paint – a very fast and very effective way to highlight resource recovery areas. For visibility from distance, paint a pillar or wall.

Is lighting good? For difficult areas, consider battery-powered sensor lights which can be glued to the wall or ceiling.

Bulky items – keep them organised into disposal groups, e.g. metal / furniture / electrical / mattresses. This helps each contractor remove their items neatly.

More people, better results

A strong community has better collaboration. Try these ideas –

- o Gardening groups
- o Plant gifting
- o BYO cuppa
- o Recycling tip n' tricks
- o Book club
- o Wrap with love (knitting)

Social events are a great way to reach residents who are not very interested in recycling. Feeling part of the community encourages participation in waste-reduction programs.



COUNCIL RESOURCES

Your local Council is likely to have free downloadable guides and posters. If needed, request fresh bin labels and large signage for service areas / bin areas.

DOORSTEP PICK-UP

Some Councils have extra collection services available via fast online booking – check their website for pick-up of polystyrene, blister packs, electrical & clothing. Or try [RecycleSmart](#)

COUNCIL DROP-OFF

Gas Bottles, car batteries, paint – do you have a volunteer to drop them off for other residents? Many retirees are happy to help.

Communication keeps up motivation

Broadcast a variety of messages, to keep residents interested –

- Call out to residents for volunteers to run an online group, such as WhatsApp or Facebook
- Search the web for 'what's on' in nearby areas & look for ideas on your [local Council website](#)
- Create a sense of fun – provide links to plant & pet sites, suggest 'life hacks' or tips for moving in/out
- Set a monthly reminder to communicate recycling progress – estimate the percentage decrease in contamination (numbers are powerful)
- Create signs which can be re-used, by selecting generic topics such as local parks & scenic places to go
- Find residents who speak languages other than English – they can help reach more people
- When checking recycling/bin areas, be sure to say 'Hi' to anyone you see – awareness that bins are being cared for & monitored encourages responsible disposal.

Use Council signs & wording for a consistent message - reduces confusion and saves on printing costs.

Savings encourages participation

Resource recovery keeps levies & rates efficient –

- Reduce quantity of rubbish bins going to the 'tip' / landfill
- Check if your strata is eligible for funding assistance to upgrade electrical fixtures to low-energy options
- Take advantage of companies which conduct reviews of water wastage – easy, often significant, savings
- Encourage observation & reporting, so small issues don't become large, expensive problems

The simple act of clean & tidy rubbish disposal can reduce cleaning time & cost by a huge amount –

- set an example, be visible & conversational
- humanise the cleaners
- create a considerate culture
- keep at it all year long, every year.