

# The Aurora TOWER



## COMMUNICATION

### Body Corporate and the Caretaker

Your Committee has been involved in a lot of projects and issues in recent months. Some we can talk about and others are restricted at the moment due to confidentiality issues. Nevertheless, we are strongly committed to keeping owners informed where we can.

Your Committee is focused on the following:

- Keeping residents safe
- Maintaining our building to a high standard
- Improving the quality of life in the building for all
- Improving the capital value of every owner's Lot

We do this by demanding a high standard and accountability from all our suppliers.

During 2019 we focused on security. The Committee engaged GHD to audit the building and identify any weaknesses. Their report is available from Gary Willis at EBCM. Also see Keys and Locks on page 3 of this newsletter.

During 2020, as part of our due diligence process and because of numerous concerns expressed by residents, we engaged Experts to evaluate our Caretaker's performance. That is, to make sure they are doing what our contract with them requires.

The reports we received, along with the security report gave us cause for concern and as a result we instructed our lawyers to write to the Caretaker and Letting Agent with our concerns in December.

These matters are now under negotiation.

Importantly, they are being considered in the **context of the Caretaker and Letting Agent's request to exercise their option to extend the term of their contracts in May 2021 by ten (10) years.**

Please read the agreements if you are unsure what this entails. These agreements are available on The Aurora Tower website.

As soon as the matters are finalised we will advise all owners of the outcome.

### Changes to Committee, Management at Aurora

Effective 31 January 2021, Ralph Donnett resigned from the Committee. Phil Conwell agreed to fill the casual vacancy of Chairperson, and Russell Christie agreed to fill the casual vacancy of Secretary.

The Committee discussed options for the vacant role of Ordinary Member and after some consideration, Bronwyn Dredge was offered the position. In her short time in the role, she's proven to be a valuable asset and an active contributor.

A further vacancy was created when Byron Roberts sold his apartment. The Committee considered the nominations received for the AGM in making their choice to fill this vacancy.

In the end, the Committee agreed to offer the position to Tracy Stanley who has been very active in the Aurora Residents Group. This is effective 28 March 2021. These changes are fully in keeping with the Act.

Gary Sinclair, the Facilities Manager for Aurora has also tendered his resignation. His replacement is Chris Brown who has now commenced work - please make him feel welcome.



420 Queen Street

## AURORA RESIDENTS GROUP

### Aurora Residents Group

The purpose of the Group is to provide a communication venue for the owners and long term tenants who are residents living in the Aurora Tower.

You can become a part of the Group by joining on the FaceBook page (search **Aurora Tower Community**).

### Date for your diary:

#### Next Aurora Residents Group Meeting.

**23 March from 6:00pm in Community Room on Level 7**

### Getting involved

You have read elsewhere in this Newsletter about the demanding roles the Executive Committee Members undertake and significant time commitment required.

The Committee has also seen and heard the call for more communication and involvement.

Happily, for the first time in some years, we have a **very active and interested** Residents Group and more than ever owners willing to be involved.

In the past, owners have joined with the Committee to carry out projects, and now is a good time to reinvigorate this by creating some **working groups** to harness all that energy and work on issues owners and residents feel need more attention.

These **working groups** will have a direct link into the Committee via an Ordinary Member who will facilitate the activities of the group.

**We want to hear your views about what these working groups might focus on.**

Our initial thoughts are:

- Owner Communication
- Building amenities (gym, pool, function room, garden, parking, concierge)
- Facility maintenance and enhancement
- Legislation influence and participation in Strata management peak bodies

This will be a great way to be involved, strengthen and learn more about the activities of the Committee, and to decide whether you might like to take on a greater role with the Committee.

Please feel free to discuss this with any member of the Committee.

Greg Lelliott and Bronwyn Dredge, as current Ordinary Members are taking the lead on this and can be contacted at:

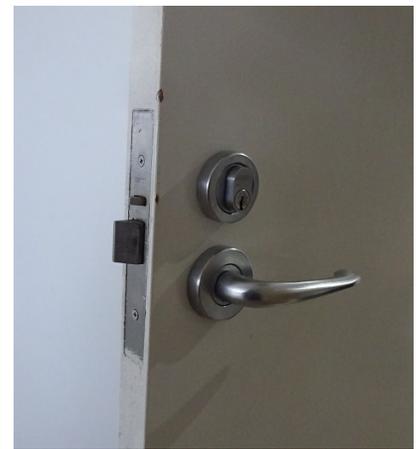
[gndlelliott@gmail.com](mailto:gndlelliott@gmail.com)

[bron.dredge@gmail.com](mailto:bron.dredge@gmail.com)

**THE BODY CORPORATE COMMITTEE IS HERE TO ADDRESS YOUR CONCERNS AS LOT OWNERS. PLEASE SEND YOUR QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS TO : [secretary@theauroratower.com.au](mailto:secretary@theauroratower.com.au)**



## SECURITY



Typical Door Lock

### Keys and Locks

In 2018, the Committee engaged GHD to audit the building and identify any weaknesses. Their report is available from Gary Willis at EBCM (see Contacts).

**Key Management** was confirmed as a critical weakness that the building manager was asked to investigate. Their recommendation was to replace the existing mechanical key system with an electronic system. With the assistance of specialists in this field, the committee conducted a separate investigation to determine the best solution for all lot owners and residents.

### Key/ Lock Solutions

There are many factors to be considered when comparing the options. Also, it is not just the system but also the management of the system that provides security to residents and property, but in general terms...

**Replace mechanical key system like with like** - \$180,000 (approx).

**Electronic system for apartment doors only** - \$260,000 (approx). This would provide a benefit for the short term letting business. However, this includes some but not all of the (approx) 500 services doors within the building which are also compromised. It is also a stand-alone system (not live) which means 'rogue' keys can be created but not canceled. The specialists do not recommend using this system at Aurora.

**Electronic system for all doors** - estimated to double the cost above to (approx) \$500,000. This covers all doors but again is a stand-alone system and has the same limitations as the previous solution.

**On-line electronic system with live connection to all doors** - \$900,000 (approx). This is the most secure system but also the most expensive. It provides maximum flexibility and reduces the risks introduced by poor key management.

**The Committee will provide more detail about these options once negotiations with the Caretaker have been finalised. The final decision will be decided at a General Meeting by the owners.**

### Access Control System (fobs)

To add further complication, the **access control system for the building** requires replacement as it is no longer supported and requires replacement. Among other areas, this system controls the operation of the swipes (FOBs) in the building eg the entry doors, the lifts, entry to the facilities on level 7 etc. The replacement cost is budgeted at \$80,000. To assist future planning, a system which has the ability to accept electronic keys will be selected, regardless of which key system is chosen.



## AIR CONDITIONING UPDATE

### Air Conditioning Pipework

As described in previous newsletters, microbial corrosion was detected in the pipes for the air conditioning system and emergency repairs were first required in 2015. **Please note that there are no known health issues associated with this corrosion.**

The corrosion was evident at the couplings only so a strategy for more comprehensive repairs was developed.

This included installing 3 heat exchangers on the roof (completed in 2020) and staged replacement of the affected couplings. (see [November 2020 newsletter](#)).

**Note that complete replacement of the pipe work was considered.** This would have cost \$2,000,000+ and had a significant impact on the building.

Since the body of the pipes was largely unaffected and the pipe was in acceptable condition, the decision was made to replace the affected couplings. The total cost for this option was initially estimated at \$1,000,000 spread over 10 years.

**Part 3 of these repairs is scheduled for this year**, with tenders to be called shortly. A further 13 couplings will be replaced using a similar method to last year.

**Air conditioning will not be available during this repair so works will be scheduled for Spring or Autumn. The outage is expected to last approximately 3 weeks.**



### COVID-19

Building management have continued to work closely with the Committee to ensure the safety of residents and guests in the building.

Based on current best advice for minimising COVID-19 risks in the building, all level 7 facilities are in operation with the exception of the sauna and showers. Social distancing must still be observed.

Digital registration is required when using any of the facilities and sanitiser has been provided at the entry points to the facilities. The Committee is monitoring the compliance requirements.



# **NOTES FROM AN ORDINARY COMMITTEE MEMBER**

**By Greg Lelliott**

Hello Aurorians,

With the AGM coming up and election of a new committee I thought I would explain my experiences in my first year on the committee. Here are a few stand out points.

Wow! It is a big ask for those who have roles in this group. Firstly is the time required. With the Aurora Tower having a population bigger than many country towns with 470+ apartments, there are a huge number of issues that need to be dealt with. I have found that ordinary members can spend over 10 hours a week dealing with meetings and emails and from what I understand, the committee executive can do over double this (20 hours plus a week).

While I would love to be involved at a higher level, my work commitments just won't allow it. Maybe when I retire in 10 years.

**This is no standard body corporate. The Aurora Towers is one of the largest residential sites in Brisbane and is now starting to see systems age and need repairs and upgrades.** It takes a lot of time and effort and sometimes inconvenience to those in the building and with a building this size, we can't just rubber stamp someone's request when approving the huge expenditure of owners money. We must do due diligence. It's your money.

The legislation surrounding bodies corporate has requirements on confidentiality so many issues can't be made public until finalised . The committee has its hands tied on many issues which can be frustrating as I believe some issues should be "sung from the hill tops" but we legally can't.

There are also a large number of issues that mainly affect residents who live here ( both long and short term) such as being nearby construction noise, building maintenance and regular poor behaviour of building guests which all need attention. While you may not see immediate results, this committee (and so should all future committees) is constantly working on improving our standard of living which in turn creates value in living and owning here.

We all must realise that in a building this size it is near impossible to keep everyone happy when the committee is required to make decisions on behalf of all owners. **Get involved.** It helps. Read meeting minutes and contact the committee to express your opinion. For the future of the building I would love to see greater involvement of both resident and investor owners in the committee activities. The committee is in the process of working through the implementation of working groups (sub-committees) for various activities going on in Aurora to make this possible.

**I've enjoyed the intense first 12 months.**

## Aurora Tower Newsletter

This newsletter is sent via **email**. Owners who haven't provided an email address to EBCM will receive a hard copy for this time only.

**Please note that all future newsletters will only be delivered by email.** They will also be posted on the website.

The Committee encourages the usage of email as it facilitates timely communication and helps to save money for all owners.

## Aurora Tower Website

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

The website has much information that is relevant for comfortable living in the building.

Owners can register for access to confidential information by clicking on 'register' on the top menu of the website.

## Reporting (online)

If there is something you wish to report to management click on 'Reporting' at the top of the website screen.

There is a drop-down menu for:

- Complaints (noise, security)
- Maintenance
- Cleaning
- General Enquiries.

Please choose the most appropriate item as it helps the message to get to the right place and can save time.

## Contacts:

Committee: [secretary@theauroratawer.com.au](mailto:secretary@theauroratawer.com.au) (Russell Christie)

Building Manager: [BMaurora@theoaksgroup.com.au](mailto:BMaurora@theoaksgroup.com.au) (Mark Fogarty)

Facilities Manager: [MaintAurora@theoaksgroup.com.au](mailto:MaintAurora@theoaksgroup.com.au) (Chris Brown)

Ernst (EBCM): [gwillis@ebcm.com.au](mailto:gwillis@ebcm.com.au) (Gary Willis)



420 Queen Street

Phone calls at busy times can get 'lost'.

**Forms can also be sent directly from smart phones.**

The security guards also receive all complaints directly on weekends.

Reporting in this way ensures that your message does reach the right people, is permanently recorded and valuable feedback can be collected by the Committee.

## Current Body Corporate Members

Phil Conwell

Russell Christie

Jan Brewer

Greg Lelliott

Greg Firth

Bronwyn Dredge

Tracy Stanley (28 March 2021)