

# CAPABILITY AND CREDENTIALS

GRACE LAWYERS, QUEENSLAND



GRACE  
LAWYERS | Know. Act. Resolve



Prepared by Jason Carlson

P: (07) 3102 4120

E: [jason.carlson@gracelawyers.com.au](mailto:jason.carlson@gracelawyers.com.au)

Know. Act. Resolve

# KNOW.ACT. RESOLVE.

In making an informed decision about choosing the right legal advice, three guiding principles should help determine your final choice.



**KNOW.** Have the track record, skills, expertise, and the right team in place to understand and solve the issue.



**ACT.** Act decisively to achieve a positive and cost-effective outcome.



**RESOLVE.** At all times, try to resolve matters and look for solutions.

These three principles have been at the centre of Grace Lawyers being recognised as the largest dedicated strata community law firm in Australia, with offices in Brisbane, Gold Coast, and Sydney, as well as also servicing Melbourne, Perth, and Canberra.

Our Queensland team operates state-wide with offices in Brisbane and on the Gold Coast. It is headed by **Jason Carlson** and **Jessica Cannon**, who have each received recognition for their industry leading teams.

Jason was on the Board of Directors of the peak strata body, Strata Community Association (Qld) for 6 years and has played a key role in shaping strata legislation for consideration by Government. In 2022, he was appointed as a Director of SCA Australasia.

Jessica was recognised as having built one of the most successful strata services businesses in 2022 and has been a key member of the SCA (Qld) Legislation Committee helping to advocate for improvements to Queensland's strata industry. In 2022, she was elected as a Director of SCA (Qld)

Teamwork is a key to every successful outcome. At Grace Lawyers, we listen to our clients, and we work as a team with our clients to achieve the best outcomes.



We provide our clients with certainty on how we operate, our fees and procedures. Please click here to view [client references](#) and here to view an [overview of our recent results](#).



*“Client contact and knowledge of their speciality (strata): exceptional. A sense of urgency with willingness and patience to explain complicated legal concepts: excellent.”*

**Peter Hughes, South Lakes at Varsity**



*“Jessica Cannon has always been there in support with clear, concise information in support of the Bodies Corporate of the development. We have found her advice to be sound, her attention to detail pleasing, her promptness of reply refreshing.”*

**Chairperson of a subsidiary scheme, and secretary of a principal scheme**

# OUR EXPERIENCED TEAM



**Jason Carlson** *Partner – Strata communities, dispute resolution, planning, environment, and development*

Jason has been heavily involved in shaping industry submissions on strata law reform in Queensland. He advocates for broadening the power of bodies corporate to make by-laws to allow strata communities to better define what is acceptable to them, giving bodies corporate stronger and more immediate powers to enforce by-laws, re-balancing management rights, and introducing new ideas to allow committees to properly address anti-social behaviours within strata communities.

In 2022, Jason received the prestigious SCA (Qld) President's Award in recognition of his contributions to and leadership within the strata industry.

Under Jason's leadership, Grace Lawyers was listed as one of three finalists in the SCA (Qld) Strata Services Business of the Year for 2020-2021 and again in 2023. We were the only law firm listed for that award. It was drawn from a wide pool of suppliers of all types of services across the industry, such as legal, insurance, property maintenance, engineering, utilities, other professional services, etc.

## Jason is a member of the following industry bodies:

- Board of Directors, Strata Community Association (Qld) –2016 – 2022
- Board of Directors, Strata Community Association Australasia - 2022
- Strata Community Australia (Qld) – Legislation Committee – since 2013
- Independent Review Panel of the Building Management Code of Australia
- Australian College of Strata Lawyers and the Queensland Law Society

From early in his legal career, Jason practiced exclusively in strata litigation. In 2015 Jason was listed as a finalist in the Dispute Resolution category of the Lawyers Weekly 30 Under 30, an awards program that identifies the best young lawyers across Australia. He was one of only two finalists in that category from Queensland, and the only finalist practicing in strata and body corporate law.



*“Jason's point of difference is that uncanny ability to make the complex, simple. He and his team have always been approachable, friendly and available, and I have always felt more comfortable and confident after speaking with them about a problem a body corporate is having.”*

**Stephanie Yun, Strata Mastery**

# OUR EXPERIENCED TEAM



**Jessica Cannon**

*Partner – Strata communities, dispute resolution, debt recovery*

Jessica Cannon is actively involved in the firm's delivery of services to all parts of Queensland and spends most of her time leading the team from our Gold Coast office. She is known for her accessibility, promptness, common-sense approach, and attention to detail.

In 2020, Jessica was appointed as a member of the SCA (Qld) Legislation Committee, which has been instrumental in the BCCM regulation module reforms. Jessica's passion is advocating for bodies corporate and ensuring they have legislation in place to support and enable them to properly administer and operate their schemes.

In recognition of her standing in the strata sector, Jessica was elected to the Board of Directors of Strata Community Association (Qld) in 2022.

Jessica advocates for pragmatic, common-sense solutions to strata disputes. Her involvement with the SCA (Qld) Legislation Committee provides her a platform to voice her position on strata reform, dealing with key and reoccurring themes in the industry, such as the imbalance with respect to management rights and the limited recourse available to bodies corporate in addressing nuisance occupiers. However, she compliments that advocacy role with having her feet firmly planted and bringing her clients pragmatic and sensible solutions to problems which often require an ongoing relationship to occur between the parties.

Jessica is a member of the Australian College of Strata Lawyers and is a frequent presenter at industry conferences.

Even in Jessica's days as a volunteer work experience student, she was exposed to the world of strata. Upon her admission to the Supreme Court of Queensland in January 2012, she immediately commenced practising exclusively in strata law and litigation. Now, many years on, Jessica is still as passionate as ever.

Strata communities are exposed to many areas of the law, however with an added layer of regulation and complexity that is 'strata'. Jessica is comfortable navigating a body corporate and its committee through whatever problem may arise.

Prior to joining Grace Lawyers in 2022, Jessica opened her own practice in 2017 (Cannon + Co Law). As its Principal, Jessica led this firm to being one of only two finalists as the Strata Service Business of the Year at the SCA (Qld) 2022 Conference. In March 2022, Jessica and her entire team joined Grace Lawyers.



# OUR EXPERIENCED TEAM

## Brenton Schoch



*Partner – Strata communities, recoveries and debt collection, insolvency*

Over those years Brenton has acted for bodies corporate in debt recovery matters, insolvency and bankruptcy proceedings, transfers and variations of management rights and provided advice on complicated property rights issues. He regularly appears in the Federal Circuit Court and Supreme Court of Queensland on behalf of bodies corporate in insolvency matters.

Brenton has established himself in the industry as a lawyer that is approachable, professional, and efficient in his dealings with clients and other parties involved in the matter.

### **Some notable results Brenton has achieved for bodies corporate include:**

- recovering in excess of \$190,000 in outstanding contributions, recovery costs and interest from a mortgagee in possession
- regularly recovering outstanding contributions, recovery costs and interest for bodies corporate when the lot owner is not residing and has not provided a reliable method of contacting them
- guiding a body corporate through a complicated recovery action where the properties were purchased with funds illegally obtained by an international company through a Ponzi scheme
- regularly guiding Bodies Corporate through amicable and highly contentious variations and transfers of management rights.

### **Other notable results Brenton has achieved for insolvency practitioners include:**

- Transmitting the title and facilitating the sale of a property that was included in a deceased estate, the beneficiary of which was a bankrupt, which ultimately allowed the trustee in bankruptcy to realise that property for the benefit of creditors
- Acting for a liquidator in the complicated sale of 5 commercial properties in the same transaction
- Successfully securing the fees of the liquidator from the liquidation of a trustee company whereby a new trustee was appointed and systematically sold off the assets of the trust
- Guiding interstate trustees and liquidators through the sale of properties in Queensland, particularly properties that are a part of a body corporate



# OUR EXPERIENCED TEAM



## Craig Francis

*Special Counsel - Dispute resolution, building and construction, insolvency*

Craig has been a qualified mediator and case appraiser since 1996, a Reporter for the Queensland Reports for the last 27 years and is presently a Sub-Editor. He was a joint author (with Lister Harrison QC) of the original title “Intellectual Property” in the online and loose-leaf publication “Court Forms and Precedents – Queensland” (Lexis Nexis).

Over a 30-year career as a barrister, Craig began working with the director of our Queensland team, Jason Carlson, in 2012. He appeared as the barrister in the following significant strata law matters:

- Appearing in the Supreme Court of Queensland to obtain an urgent injunction to prevent the termination of an administration agreement for a large body corporate management business (unreported decision).
- Appearing in the Queensland Court of Appeal to successfully resist an appeal made by a caretaker alleging that its management rights were unlawfully terminated, and successfully advocating for a cross-appeal to establish that the body corporate could not be held liable for an ultra vires committee decision: *Famestock Pty Ltd v The Body Corporate for No 9 Port Douglas Road* [2013] QCA 354.0
- Appearing before Member Roney QC of the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal in *Re Body Corporate for Viridian; Kjerulf Ainsworth & Ors v Martin Albrecht & Anor* [2014] QCATA 294 to successfully appeal an adjudicator’s order overturning opposition to a resolution without dissent. This matter eventually made its way to the High Court of Australia, in which the QCAT appeal decision was affirmed as correct.
- Appearing in the Supreme Court of Queensland to resist an attempt to have a claim struck out for want of jurisdiction, producing one of the leading authorities on the extent of the exclusive jurisdiction of an adjudicator in the Office of the Commissioner for Body Corporate and Community Management: *MacDonald & anor v Clark & anor* [2012] QSC 418.



# TESTIMONIALS

## A FINAL WORD

Strata and body corporate matters and related areas are complex, reflecting enormous growth the strata sector has seen over the last 20 years.

Grace Lawyers was there from the very beginning in 2005 when strata and the body corporate sector started to address the industry challenges that growth brings.

We have grown with strata, and we have helped shape the strata sector along the way.

And we have done that by adhering to our guiding principles of KNOW. ACT. **RESOLVE.**

Please click here to watch our video on the strata sector. 



*“Our body corporate had become bogged down with a very difficult resort management situation together with endless QCAT involvement. Our committee could see no end in sight. It was recommended that we move across from our current lawyers to Jason Carlson of Grace Lawyers.”* – **Rob Dowdell, Cairns Golden Sands**



*“I came across Grace Lawyers when I was in a difficult situation and looking for a second opinion. From the first contact, and throughout the entire process in QCAT, I felt comfortable, confident and supported. There are clear differences between Grace Lawyers and other law firms I have worked with in the past.”* – **Harry Clark, Smith & Sons**



*“I reached out to Jason when one of my bodies corporate had a legal issue and was blown away by his advice and the professional way he dealt with the problem. I have worked with many other lawyers, but Jason and his team at Grace Lawyers is my first port of call.”* – **Pedzi Mawande, The Community Co**



*“Over the years I have been exposed to quite a bit of legal argument. The submission prepared by Grace Lawyers stands out as a work of excellent, best summed up by a couple of words: great clarity.”* – **Rob Roater, Glengarry Private Courts**