

MANAGING TASKS AND PEOPLE IN COMMUNITY SCHEMES

(By Hannes Swanepoel)



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As community schemes grow more complex, keeping people and tasks aligned takes more than email and spreadsheets.

Community scheme living, whether under sectional title or a homeowners' association, has become far more complex. Community schemes are bigger, member expectations are higher, and compliance requirements are tightening every year. Getting the people and the tasks in a community scheme pulling in the same direction is no longer something a managing agent can do with the use of traditional tools such as emails and Excel sheets. It takes the right technology to bring every stakeholder together in one place.

A community scheme involves a wide network of people: managing agents, trustees or directors, on-site staff, and a long list of service providers. Even a single task can pull in several parties at once. Take an insurance claim for a burst geyser as an example – the owner reporting it, the broker handling the claim, the portfolio manager coordinating the process, and the contractor doing the repair, all need to be aligned. The same pattern repeats across a community scheme's daily life. A levy default might move from the managing agent to the trustees to a debt collection attorney before it is resolved. A maintenance project might involve several contractors, competing quotes, and trustee sign-off before work even starts. In each case, the risk is not a lack of goodwill - it is a lack of visibility. Without a shared view of what is happening, work stalls waiting on one person to relay information, and nobody outside that person can confirm the status of anything should they not be available. A technology driven property management platform solves this by giving every stakeholder a single, shared point of reference – one place where everyone can see what is happening and what is expected of them, which keeps the whole process transparent and moving.

Nearly every task in a community scheme generates paperwork that has to be kept safe and made available to the right people – invoices, quotes, reports and correspondence, all of it potentially needed again when the community scheme's books are audited or when CSOS is asked to intervene in a dispute. Relying on one person's inbox or an unstructured shared drive means paperwork gets lost and the never ending search begins. The right platform stores these documents centrally and gives relevant stakeholders access to view or work on them directly, without a bottleneck. That matters for more than convenience – a clean, retrievable audit trail is increasingly what regulators, auditors and even owners expect as a matter of course, not a nice-to-have.

Managing tasks in a community scheme, at its core, is really about managing the people carrying them out, and that comes down to a handful of basics done consistently: clear communication at every step, clear instructions for whoever is responsible for a task, quick access to whatever information or documents that person needs to act, and transparent reporting once the task is done. None of these are complicated on their own. What makes them hard is doing them across dozens of open tasks, several stakeholders per task, and multiple community schemes at once – exactly the kind of coordination that spreadsheets and email threads were never built to handle.

Bringing it together

None of this is about technology for its own sake. It is about giving every stakeholder in a community scheme - owners, trustees, agents, staff and service providers - the same picture of what is happening, so that tasks move, responsibility is clear, and nothing depends on one person remembering to forward an email. The tools which do this already exist. The community schemes and managing agents who adopt them now will be the ones meeting member expectations and staying compliant.



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