



# ANNUAL REPORT

2019-2020

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## ABOUT US

The Tenants Union of Victoria Ltd (operating as Tenants Victoria) was formed more than 45 years ago to promote and protect the rights of tenants and residents in all forms of residential accommodation in Victoria. We aim to inform and educate tenants about their rights and work for social change to improve conditions for all tenants.

Tenants Victoria acknowledges the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin Nation as the traditional owners of the land on which we practise.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people should be aware that this publication may contain images or names of people who have since passed away.

Images: Pages 4 and 5 - Tenants Victoria, Other photos - Stock Photography  
Production: Tenants Victoria

# CHAIR'S REPORT

The 2019-2020 year at Tenants Victoria has been one of change and renewal and disruption, as we continued to extend our capabilities to assist Victorian renters and work for ongoing reform to the rental housing system. We were able to adapt quickly to the significant impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on our operations. Most importantly, we were determined to continue our direct assistance and support to renters, while advocating for immediate governmental response to the drastic impact on renters of COVID-19 related job losses. As this Report shows, we have succeeded in this aim while we acknowledge there is much more to do.



While the response to the coronavirus took much of the time of the CEO and the Board in the first half of 2020, the planned organisational renewal continued, led by our CEO. A senior leadership structure was developed, and appointments made, and a variety of other steps taken to create new opportunities for staff to use their many skills in the service of renters and system reform. An upgrade of ICT was fast tracked, and new programs designed. These changes strengthen Tenants Victoria's capability to assist more renters through collaboration, advice, policy and advocacy.

I would like to thank my director colleagues for their enthusiastic and untiring commitment to Tenants Victoria. It was a very busy year and the Board met frequently. Despite the challenges presented by COVID-19, the Board maintained its focus on constant improvement of its performance including self-appraisal and review of its Action Plan and policies. Planning also began for a new strategic plan and this work is continuing.

Financially, Tenants Victoria is in a stable and sound position enabling us to plan initiatives that will extend our work for renters. The Board thanks our funders this year, namely, the Department of Health and Human Services, Victoria Legal Aid, Consumer Affairs Victoria and Study Melbourne (the Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions) for their generous support of our work.

Our CEO, Jennifer Beveridge, has led Tenants Victoria with distinction in this most challenging year, inspiring the Board and staff to embrace change and renewal in order to achieve our purpose. On behalf of the Board I thank her for her enthusiastic work. My thanks also to our wonderful staff who leapt into action to adjust and adapt, fired by their commitment to the needs of our clients and all Victorian renters.

Tenants Victoria moves into the 2020-21 year with energy, enthusiasm and excitement. The Board is honoured to be part of the work.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "J. A. Dickson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Judith Dickson  
Chair, Tenants Victoria

This past year was always going to be significant for Tenants Victoria as we developed plans for change—little did we know the scale of change that would be required. From bushfires to the onset of the once-in-a-lifetime health crisis, 2020 started in an unprecedented way for Victorians. I am proud of the way the Board and staff rose to the challenge and adapted with minimal fuss to make decisions, work from home and build a collaborative approach to supporting and advocating for tenants.

For renters who come to us, navigating their relationship with their landlord can be challenging at the best of times, let alone in this emergency caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. From February 2020 we were contacted by a steady stream of distressed renters worried about the viability of their tenancies, starting with international students and then people who had lost jobs and income.

Tenants Victoria worked closely with the Victorian Government, Ministers and their departments to share the real experiences of residential tenants during this pandemic. We commend the Government on its consultation and the strong supports it provided to ensure that homes and health were protected, even if jobs were lost. In a challenging scenario, the Victorian Government has responded effectively with respect and care for renters.

Thank you to the many people who have contributed to our achievements. These include our capable Senior Leadership Team, the Board members, and all who support us through their donations and funding so that we can continue our work for and on behalf of tenants—and a big thank you to our staff, who have worked with compassion, dedication and intelligence.

Our legal and outreach team works daily with people in distress who report poor housing conditions and conduct by real estate agents and landlords, scenarios only exacerbated by the pandemic. I commend their commitment and skills as they advise renters, representing them where necessary at VCAT, the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal, and collating information to be used in systemic advocacy. They also provide secondary consultation to community legal centres and other community organisations, extending our footprint as a specialist legal centre.



**“For renters who come to us, navigating their relationship with their landlord can be challenging at the best of times, let alone in this emergency caused by the COVID-19 pandemic”.**

**“I invite you, our supporters, to join with us as we work towards a future where tenants’ rights are secured and these rights mean renters are able to enjoy their homes to the full extent.”**

Our community engagement team ensures that legal information is available to renters in ways that are accessible and useful so that people can address their issues early and do not need to seek specific legal advice. We hope our new website will facilitate better knowledge about renting.

We look forward to the new regulations that will implement the significant reforms to the Victorian Residential Tenancies Act. Due to the disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, they come into force at the end of March 2021. When fully implemented they will provide more protections for tenants in Victoria than anywhere else in the country.

My thanks to Judith Dickson, the Chair, and other Board members for steering the organisation as it deals with the COVID-19 emergency, while at the same time pursuing the path of transition and growth. I commend their staunch, and voluntary, commitment to Tenants Victoria and look forward to continuing our fruitful working relationship as we do everything possible to ensure protections for tenants during the fall-out from the pandemic and beyond.

Finally, I invite you, our supporters, to join with us as we work towards a future where tenants’ rights are secured and these rights mean renters are able to enjoy their homes to the full extent. Your support helps us do more for tenants. Please keep in touch with us through our new website, our newsletter and social media as we navigate the year ahead.



Jennifer Beveridge,  
Chief Executive Officer, Tenants Victoria



### Coordinated effort to help bushfire communities recover

Victoria experienced bushfires of unprecedented intensity over summer, particularly around the state's north-east. The community legal sector, including Tenants Victoria, worked together to ensure that residents affected by the bushfires had ready access to legal assistance and advice. We commenced work with local generalist community legal centres, and other specialist community legal centres, in a coordinated legal effort to help recovering communities. Our response included delivering training to local services in the regions, and feedback on the development of factsheets and other resources

### COVID-19 crisis heightens international students' challenges

International students first contacted us about the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in February 2020. Students stranded overseas by travel restrictions were left with lease obligations in Victoria while those still in the state had lost work and were not eligible for federal income support. The pandemic came as international students already contend

with exploitative housing practices due to lack of familiarity with local laws, language barriers, and limited social support. Read more about their challenges and Tenants Victoria's action on page 8.

### Family violence protections strengthened

While most amendments in the landmark Residential Tenancies Amendment Act 2018 are now due to come into effect in early 2021, in March 2020 the Act's additional protections for family violence survivors were introduced, alongside the COVID-19 emergency-measures. Our legal practice sees many cases in which family violence is a factor and for which these legislative changes are critical, so they did not come a moment too soon. They include mechanisms for survivors to end a tenancy early or create a new tenancy due to family or personal violence and powers for VCAT to apportion tenancy debts in family violence cases.

### New leadership team brings fresh skills

We boosted the organisation's skill sets and leadership capabilities, creating new senior roles to continue the transformation of Tenants Victoria as a dynamic community legal centre.

People and Culture Manager Kylie Betts brings experience spanning the corporate, disability and broader not-for-profit sectors. Director of Community Engagement Farah



70%

*of surveyed clients said they would recommend Tenants Victoria*

Farouque, with a media and community background, leads a team spanning advocacy, policy and research, training and media and communications. Director of Legal Services Agata Wierzbowski, with over 10 years' experience in the community legal sector, leads our legal services team of lawyers, outreach workers and intake workers. Corporate Services Manager Nick Hinneberg applies 20 years' management experience to a remit including technology, business contracts and technical services.

## Technology transforms

We began work on upgrading our ICT infrastructure in 2019. As the COVID-19 restrictions set in from March 2020 we built on that work to overcome the challenges of maintaining our services by changing all our operations as staff began working from home. We streamlined and overhauled our outdated ICT infrastructure and third-party supports. This included implementing important remote security protocols to ensure staff could access the information,

resources and support they needed. We introduced a new online communication platform, enabling staff to easily collaborate from home.

While experiencing much greater demand for our services we were able to maintain operations and minimise disruption for the many renters seeking our advice.

**“I’m retired and used your service during and after my retirement. Have also helped my son re rental issues via your great service.”**

**- Comment from client satisfaction survey**



Our legal team offers free and confidential advice, assistance and advocacy for tenants and residents renting in Victoria. Usually clients will contact our team through our telephone advice service, email advice service or through referral from other community service organisations. This enables tenants with questions to receive the information they need to handle their own issue while eligible tenants with more complex issues can be progressed through to more detailed advice and legal representation.

Over the 2019-2020 year, our team responded to 9,999 enquiries from people needing advice and guidance and handled 523 active cases. We also provided secondary consultation on 1,656 cases through tenancy and community service partners.

### COVID-19 emergency changes to tenancy laws

In March 2020, the Victorian Government passed changes to the Residential Tenancies Act in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Many of the changes brought welcome support and relief for tenants struggling due to the crisis.

The changes included stopping evictions on the basis of rent arrears where this was caused due to COVID-19 hardship, stopping the use of Notices of Intention to Vacate and requiring all eviction applications by landlords to go through VCAT, preventing rent increases, allowing tenants to end their lease early when experiencing severe hardship, and not requiring the payment of lease-breaking costs.

We experienced a significant increase in demand for our services due to the sheer number of tenants, mostly renting in the private sector, affected by the uncertainty and hardship caused by COVID-19. We heard from many tenants who had not previously tried to use our service, as well as tenants who needed assistance at numerous points of their journey. We sought to continue to provide our much-needed phone and email advice services, despite the challenges for the organisation of quickly shifting to all staff working from home and the complexity of the new laws.

### Outreach program for international students

One group that has been particularly impacted during the COVID-19 pandemic is international students. Many live in high-density rooming houses—registered or unregistered—which pose a particular risk during the pandemic.

During previous outreach visits by Tenants Victoria to unregistered rooming houses occupied by international students we have found that tenancy protections are often breached. For example: bonds are not lodged, house rules are restrictive, tenancy agreements are illegal, residents are required to pay additional charges for utilities and other services and repairs are not undertaken. Students are unwilling or unable to pursue their rights.



These findings led us to establish a pilot program, the International Students Rooming House Outreach Program, which began operation in September 2020.

**“Down to earth lawyers.”**

- Comment from client satisfaction survey

## VCAT finds tenant interests outweigh landlord's

Matilda is a small-business owner. Until 2020, she, partner Rob, and two of her children from a previous relationship lived comfortably in their rented Melbourne home. Rob also ran his own business. Circumstances forced both Matilda's and Rob's businesses to shut at the start of 2020. In March both contracted COVID-19, were admitted to hospital and suffered post-viral symptoms for months.

At about the time they fell ill, Matilda's landlord, likely fearing a property-market downturn, decided to sell her home. The landlord's agent recommended that the property be sold vacant, and Matilda and Rob received a Notice to Vacate in late March. Because of COVID-19 measures the notice was ineffective, so in May the landlord applied to VCAT for a termination order to end the tenancy.

Matilda sought advice from us in late May. She told us she had been a victim of family violence at the hands of the father of her children and feared that if she had to move into insecure housing, he might try to gain custody.

We appeared on Matilda's behalf at VCAT to argue that it would not be reasonable to end her tenancy, taking into account the impact on Matilda and her family on the one hand, and the landlord on the other. The tribunal found the landlord had not produced sufficient evidence of financial hardship, and that the evidence suggested that the impact of termination on Matilda and her family would be greater than the impact of no termination on the landlord. It dismissed the landlord's application.

**“How lucky are we renters to have such people working to improve, educate and support us.”**

Lyn, in correspondence to one of our lawyers

9999

*enquiries from people seeking advice*

523

*active cases handled by our legal team*

1656

*cases in consultation with service partners*

## Top 5 reasons for enquiries

- 1 *Compensation*
- 2 *Repairs*
- 3 *Lease-breaking*
- 4 *Bond refund*
- 5 *COVID-19 – other*

**“Being kind and compassionate really made a difference to me, you made me feel a lot safer in a very difficult real estate negotiation.”**

- Comment from client satisfaction survey



# OUTREACH SERVICES

The Tenants Victoria Outreach Program assists some of the state's most vulnerable tenants who reside in rooming houses. It provides tenancy advice and vital pathways to long-term secure housing options, and short-to-medium-term outreach support and health services.

In doing so, we are able to gain a holistic perspective and understanding of the systemic issues affecting these tenants, which feeds directly into our policy work and helps regulators to enforce statutory requirements.

This year, we made 189 visits to rooming houses and provided 70 residents with 132 service referrals.

## Partnerships extend our reach

The Tenants Victoria Outreach Program works in partnership with other outreach programs, particularly the Community Connections Programs. The services help residents explore safer housing options, assist with priority housing applications, link them with health and other services and assist with resettlement into new accommodation. The programs build relationships with residents that enable them to identify urgent issues. These are referred to Tenants Victoria for assistance, including repairs and maintenance, harassment, threats of illegal eviction and compensation claims.

## Health promotion in response to pandemic

The COVID-19 pandemic heightened concerns about rooming-house residents already in dire poverty as emergency relief support services were reduced. The nature of rooming houses increases health risks, and residents contend with many barriers to staying safe. For example, up to ten people share common areas including bathrooms, toilets and kitchens.

The Tenants Victoria Outreach program was

part of a joint response by homelessness support providers, councils and others in Melbourne's north and west to deliver food and hygiene kits to residents and provide health information.

189

*visits made to  
rooming houses*

132

*service referrals to*

70

*residents*

137

*rooming houses in  
north-west Melbourne  
identified at higher  
COVID-19 risk due to  
poor management &  
maintenance & high  
needs of residents*

The visiting outreach workers were pleased to find that residents were aware of public health messages. They were not having visitors and were making every effort to stay safe and keep the premises clean, despite rooming house operators generally not undertaking extra cleaning.

Some urgent needs were also responded to, including international students with no income and older residents in chronic poor health.

## **Students illegally evicted from unregistered rooming house**

**Six international students rented a three-bedroom city apartment. The company that sublet to them was also the tenant for many other properties in the same block and had been embroiled in nearly 150 matters at VCAT. The students, who were up to date with their rent, were not aware of any problems until police knocked on the door with a warrant of possession. The subletting company had not been paying rent to the owner.**

**The Melbourne University Student Union referred them to Tenants Victoria. Our legal service assisted the students to obtain an interim and final restraining order from VCAT and advocated for them to remain in the apartment for 30 days while they looked for other housing. It also determined the arrangement was an unregistered rooming house.**

**In contempt of those orders, the company operator illegally evicted the residents in the middle of the night and removed their furniture. Tenants Victoria returned to VCAT immediately and arranged for the residents to return to the apartment for 30 days while they sought other accommodation. The Salvation Army secured free bedding and furniture to replace the belongings removed during the illegal eviction. The matter was referred to Consumer Affairs Victoria, which continues to investigate.**

## **Residents supported after rooming house fails fire safety regulations**

**After a local council inspection of a nine-room rooming house above a hotel in Melbourne's west the council issued emergency orders after the owner failed to address building fire safety requirements.**

**Tenants Victoria collaborated with support services including members of the Assertive Outreach Program Network, the council and the Department of Health and Human Services in an effort to prevent immediate eviction and ensure that time was allowed for the eight remaining residents to find suitable alternative housing. Many had lived there for several years and were deeply connected to the area.**

**Three of the men were assisted to move into long-term affordable housing. Another three were living in short-term accommodation while being supported to move into longer-term housing.**

A key element of our work is providing information on renting issues to renters, community organisations, government and the public via our website, training, media, social media, policy submissions, advocacy and other means. We engage with diverse communities and individual renters about renters' rights and concerns, whether they live in houses, apartments, rooming houses, student accommodation or caravan parks.

We also provided advice, training and other services to more than 120 community organisations that work with people facing greater barriers to decent rented housing, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, immigrants and refugees, those experiencing homelessness and people seeking safety from family violence.

The COVID-19 crisis that unfolded from January 2020 dominated the second half of the year. We responded quickly and nimbly, pivoting to online training, introducing new information on our website and ramping up our social media output.

## Website

Our website is often the first port of call for people needing answers to queries. In 2019-20, it was visited by 643,045 people over 920,020 sessions. With visitors reading an average of two pages in each session, our website received 1.76 million page views over the year. Compared to the previous year there was a 25 per cent increase in people and sessions, a 27 per cent increase in new visitors and a 28 per cent increase in page views (source: Google Analytics).

Our website's factsheets and step-by-step guides help tenants understand their rights and stand up for them. This year, we created an extensive guide for tenants on the temporary changes to renting laws in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and the restrictions to help stop the spread of

the virus. This COVID-19 guide covers topics such as rent reduction, eviction, repairs, inspections and moving. It was the most visited page of our website for the year—even though it was only online for the final four months.



## Social and mainstream media

Our social and mainstream media engagement was strong and soared in March 2020 as the COVID-19 crisis escalated. In that month there was a 315 per cent daily increase in reach on Facebook, and on Twitter a 256 per cent increase in the views of our posts. Both platforms proved to be valuable tools in distributing information to renters and referring them to information on our website. The largest audience group by age on Facebook and Twitter comprised 25-34 year-olds.

Over the year our total reach on Facebook was 119,593 people while on Twitter our posts were seen 155,800 times. The most viewed posts came during the COVID-19 pandemic. On Facebook a post on getting a rent reduction achieved a reach of 10,700 people. A post on not accepting rent deferrals gained 11,200 views on Twitter.

Tenants Victoria appeared in 1450 mainstream media reports. The outlets we appeared in included ABC radio stations for

Melbourne, Ballarat, Geelong and the South West Coast, 3AW, KIIS 101.1FM, and television news bulletins on Channel Seven, Channel Nine and the ABC.

The reach of our newsletter, The Renters Review, increased to 5,653 recipients.

## Training

We ran a total of 42 community service training sessions, reaching 911 people – despite the public health restrictions in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, which led to the cancellation or suspension of 16 sessions. One of our focuses is ensuring culturally and linguistically diverse people and Indigenous people have access to information about their rights as renters—well over one third (371) of the people who received training represented those community groups. We are pleased that 96 per cent of participants found the training to be above average in quality and presentation.

In response to the suspension of on-site training sessions from early March we provided remote COVID-19 tenancy training for the Tenancy Assistance and Advocacy Program, Tenancy Plus Program, community legal centres, community sector organisations and the public.

## TUTAR

Tenants Victoria's online tenancy and advocacy program, TUTAR, provides clear and concise advice on a broad range of tenancy matters for community sector tenancy advocates. It contains video training sessions, step-by-step guides and forums to promote discussion among users. In 2019–20, TUTAR was accessed 4281 times by 48 TUTAR users.

## Most visited website advice pages:

- 1 *COVID-19 guide for renters*
- 2 *Breaking a lease*
- 3 *Repairs*
- 4 *Bonds*
- 5 *When you want to leave*



*Our website received more than*

**1.76**  
MILLION  
PAGE VIEWS

*Our fact sheets and handbooks were accessed more than*

**1.25**  
MILLION  
TIMES

*We ran more than*

**42**

*community training sessions reaching*

**911**  
PEOPLE

*with 96% responding positively to the training*

# 7 RENTING IN THE PANDEMIC

The COVID-19 pandemic is a crisis like no other in the past century. It challenged our most basic needs—health, employment and housing. Almost in the blink of an eye, renters lost jobs, lost income, were suddenly unable to pay their rent, and then faced the threat of losing their home, all in the context of being told to stay at home to stay safe.

Tenants Victoria was inundated with calls, emails and visits to our website from worried renters fearful of what the pandemic meant for their lives, their families and their health. Stories told to us were characterised by uncertainty, distress, confusion and helplessness.

We were told about landlords who issued a notice to vacate after being informed that their tenants had lost jobs. Tenants reported that landlords refused to negotiate rent reductions despite banks indicating they would adjust mortgage terms in response to hardship and government incentives including land-tax relief. Agents and landlords often offered only a deferral of the rent, rather than a rent reduction under measures introduced by the Victorian Government.

Our survey of renters' experiences in seeking reduced rents due to hardship found that many met significant barriers. Landlords and real estate agents' lack of responsiveness to renters' queries, excessive demands for personal information and suggestions on how renters can better manage their financial situations all emerged as themes.

Tenants Victoria aimed to be agile and innovative in our response to the increased demand for advice and information, even as our ability to provide services was challenged by the circumstances created by the pandemic.

We increased emphasis on email advice assistance due to the surge in demand and to the move by all staff to working from home. We used our website as a dynamic resource, creating a COVID-19 guide on the Government's public health restrictions and emergency changes to renting laws, and frequently updated it in response to new measures. We switched from face-to-face training for community workers and others to webinars, started informative 'Q&A' sessions on Facebook Live and contributed to other online forums. Along with other organisations, Tenants Victoria advocated to the Victorian Government early in the pandemic. It was important to ensure housing security was a critical foundation of the public health response. The Government responded





positively, and its support measures helped Victorians who rent to stay at home safely in response to a challenging, complex and changing situation. There was also a recognition of the power imbalance between the landlord and tenant and an expectation that finding a solution is a shared responsibility rather than leaving the full burden to fall on the tenant.

Tenants Victoria is committed to continue work with the State Government on protecting renters from the impacts of the pandemic. We are also committed to working with the Government on a sustainable way to both resolve the health crisis and ensure future housing security and enjoyment of their homes for the 30 per cent of Victorians who rent.

## NEW PET LAW IS PERFECT TIMING

One of the reforms in the landmark Residential Tenancies Amendment Act 2018 makes owning a pet in a rented home much easier.

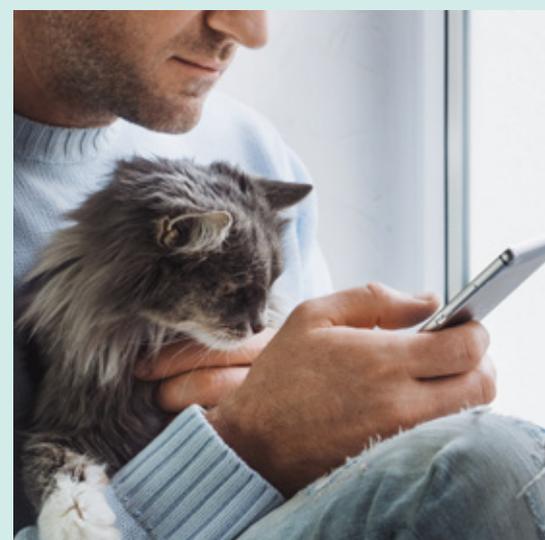
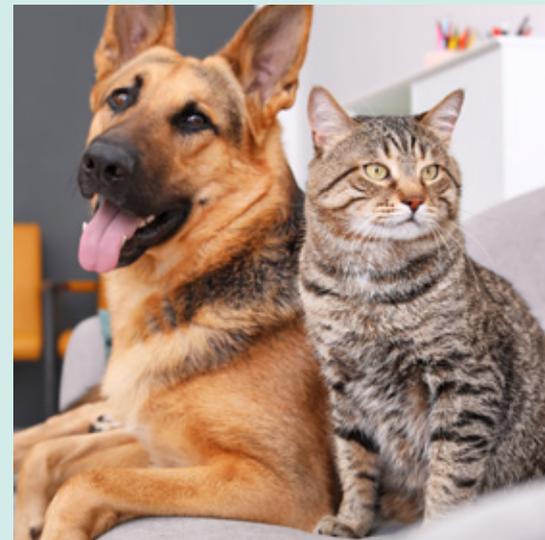
Under the new laws, renters can keep pets at a rental property with the written permission of the landlord, who can only refuse with approval from VCAT. Previously, most leases included terms prohibiting tenants from having pets, which many tenants believed they could not challenge.

While most of the laws in the new Act won't come into effect until March 2021, the pet laws were introduced much earlier, on March 2, 2020. The timing could not have been better for renters, occurring just a few weeks before restrictions began in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Since then animal shelter organisations in Melbourne and Geelong have reported an unprecedented surge in both adoption inquiries and requests to foster animals. One organisation temporarily closed its foster program due to overwhelming community response.

Tenants Victoria welcomed the new laws as good for people and good for pets—and a recognition that rented residential properties are also homes.

The RSPCA has previously reported that around 15 per cent of the dogs and cats surrendered to its shelters are due to owners moving into rentals where pets are not allowed.



Tenants Victoria reported a net surplus of \$115,132 this financial year, up from \$33,821 in the previous financial year. This was made up of:

- Revenue from ordinary activities of \$2,838,272, an increase of \$354,970 on last year
- Total expenses of \$2,723,140, an increase of \$273,659 on last year.

As was the case in previous years, the majority of our revenue was represented by grant monies provided by the Department of Health and Human Services Victoria (40.6 per cent of total revenue), Victoria Legal Aid (32.8 per cent) and Consumer Affairs Victoria (24.0 per cent). The composition of our revenue by funding source is broadly in line with last year.

We have met all the requirements that are associated with each funding grant and we thank each organisation for their support of Tenants Victoria.

Employee benefits expenses (\$1,873,248) is our major expense item, representing 66.0 per cent of our overall expenditure. This was up \$209,793 on last year's result.

Of the remaining expenditure items, we have this year experienced higher organisational improvement and consulting expenses as we have commenced a number of programs which will assist both the organisation and Tenants Victoria staff with the delivery of our services.

It is also worth noting that there is a new classification in this year's accounts for the rent expense of our Fitzroy office, as a result of the new accounting standards for leases (AASB 16). Where previously this would be included under occupancy expenses, the total value of the rental payments for the full duration of the lease is included on the balance sheet (as a right of use asset) and the current year's rental is treated as a depreciation charge in the profit and loss statement (and the cumulative value of the depreciation from the current and previous years is included under accumulated depreciation in the balance sheet).

As at June 2020, Tenants Victoria has cash reserves of \$1,352,109, all of which is held in at-call savings accounts and on short-term deposit. This is a small increase on last year (\$1,230,260) and is the major asset on our balance sheet. Of our total liabilities, the key items are grant monies received in advance of \$344,916 and employee entitlements totalling \$187,569.

Tenants Victoria is in a strong financial position and this will enable us to continue to meet our organisational objectives into the future.



Matthew Whitbread  
Chief Financial  
Officer

## STATEMENT OF PROFIT OR LOSS

*for the year ended 30 June 2020*

	2020 \$	2019 \$
Revenue from ordinary activities	2,838,272	2,483,302
Employee benefits expense	(1,873,248)	(1,663,455)
Information and communications technology expenses	(221,629)	(249,247)
Depreciation expenses	(165,484)	(14,823)
Organisational improvement and consultancy expenses	(140,164)	(53,192)
Administration expenses	(119,118)	(150,738)
Project expenses	(83,525)	(60,045)
Occupancy expenses	(78,874)	(195,165)
Library and resources	(37,266)	(32,465)
Other expenses	(3,832)	(30,351)
Surplus before income tax	115,132	33,821
Income tax expense	-	-
<b>Net surplus for the year</b>	115,132	33,821
<b>Other comprehensive income</b>		
Other comprehensive income for the year, net of tax	-	-
<b>Total comprehensive income for the year</b>	115,132	33,821
Total comprehensive income attributable to members of the entity	115,132	33,821

# STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

*for the year ended 30 June 2020*

	2020	2019
	\$	\$
CURRENT ASSETS		
Cash and cash equivalents	1,352,109	1,230,260
Trade and other receivables	367,150	2,253
Other current assets	37,566	89,818
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS	1,756,825	1,322,331
NON-CURRENT ASSETS		
Trade and other receivables	10,004	10,003
Plant and equipment	96,423	57,912
Right of use assets	115,760	-
TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS	222,187	67,915
TOTAL ASSETS	1,979,012	1,390,246
CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Trade and other payables	121,662	130,499
Current tax liabilities	44,162	17,280
Short-term provisions	178,041	123,331
Lease liabilities	126,541	-
Other current liabilities	344,916	369,648
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES	815,322	640,758
NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Long-term provisions	9,528	9,626
TOTAL NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES	9,528	9,626
TOTAL LIABILITIES	824,850	650,384
NET ASSETS	1,154,162	739,862
EQUITY		
Retained surplus	1,154,162	739,862
TOTAL EQUITY	1,154,162	739,862

# STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN EQUITY

*for the year ended 30 June 2020*

	<b>Retained Surplus \$</b>	<b>Capital Reserve \$</b>	<b>Total \$</b>
<b>Balance as at 1 July 2018</b>	691,041	15,000	706,041
<i>Comprehensive Income</i>			
Surplus for the year	33,821	-	33,821
Other comprehensive income	-	-	-
<b>Total comprehensive income</b>	33,821	-	33,821
Transfer to (from) reserves	15,000	(15,000)	-
<b>Balance as at 30 June 2019</b>	739,862	-	739,862
<b>Balance as at 1 July 2019</b>	739,862	-	739,862
Cumulative adjustment upon adoption of new accounting standards – AASB 15 and AASB 16	299,168	-	299,168
<b>Balance as at 1 July 2019 restated</b>	1,039,030	-	1,039,030
<i>Comprehensive Income</i>			
Surplus for the year	115,132	-	115,132
Other comprehensive income	-	-	-
<b>Total comprehensive income</b>	115,132	-	115,132
Transfer to (from) reserves	-	-	-
<b>Balance as at 30 June 2020</b>	1,154,162	-	1,154,162

# STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

*for the year ended 30 June 2020*

	2020 \$	2019 \$
<b>CASH FLOW FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES</b>		
Receipts from government and other sources	3,026,747	2,778,560
Payments to suppliers and employees	(2,707,907)	(2,679,611)
Interest received	8,288	13,741
Net cash provided by operating activities	327,128	112,690
<b>CASH FLOW FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES</b>		
Payment for plant and equipment	(65,082)	(62,069)
Payment for leased property	(140,197)	-
Net cash used in investing activities	(205,279)	(62,069)
<b>CASH FLOW FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES</b>		
Net cash provided by financing activities	-	-
Net increase in cash held	121,849	50,621
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of financial year	1,230,260	1,179,639
Cash and cash equivalents at end of financial year	1,352,109	1,230,260

Tenants Victoria would like to thank our hardworking team for their dedication to improving outcomes for renters in Victoria in 2019-2020.

## STAFF

### Senior Leadership Team

Jennifer Beveridge, Chief Executive Officer  
 Kylie Betts, People and Culture Manager  
 Farah Farouque, Director of Community Engagement  
 Nick Hinneberg, Corporate Services Manager (started 19 August 2020)  
 Agata Wierzbowski, Director of Legal Services

### Corporate Services

Marisol Bombal, Bookkeeper  
 Tayla Nguyen, Administration Officer

### Community Engagement

Adrian Campion, Training Officer  
 Benjamin Cording, Principal Lawyer  
 Kelly McBrady, Digital Communications Officer  
 Sunita McGregor, Publications Officer  
 Natalie Rutherford, Policy Officer  
 Tracey Ryan, Senior Lawyer  
 Jacqui Solomon, Paralegal

### Legal Services

Matthew Andrea, Senior Lawyer  
 Harpreet Dhandwar, Lawyer  
 Catherine Dyer, Outreach Worker  
 William Maloney, VCAT Duty Lawyer  
 Bridget Mannix, Lawyer  
 Cindy Nguyen, Senior Lawyer  
 Craig Nixon, Senior Lawyer  
 Jacqueline Solomon, Lawyer  
 Hilton Thai, Lawyer  
 Katherine Valenta, Referral Project Lawyer  
 Georga Wootton, Outreach Lawyer

## SENIOR LEADERSHIP TEAM

**Jennifer Beveridge**, *Chief Executive Officer*

Jennifer has been CEO of Tenants Victoria since June 2019. A collaborative not-for-profit leader, her experience spans management and service delivery roles in housing, health, youth and community development over 25 years. Before joining Tenants Victoria, Jennifer was CEO for seven years at Eating Disorders Victoria. She has also worked at Jesuit Social Services and Merri Health and lectured at La Trobe University. Awarded a Churchill Fellowship in 2016, she undertook a study program at Harvard University on how innovation and collaboration can improve service outcomes. Jennifer's initial training was as a clinical speech pathologist. She has two master's degrees – a Master of Strategic Foresight and an MBA, both from Swinburne University.

**Kylie Betts**, *People and Culture Manager*

A human resources leader who has worked in Australia and overseas, her professional experience spans the corporate, disability and broader not-for-profit sectors. Kylie has worked in HR for the Energy Savings Trust in the UK, and in Melbourne for Kraft and the welfare agency Good Shepherd and places a high priority on a partnership approach within Tenants Victoria to develop staff and internal culture and shape organisational capability.

**Farah Farouque**, *Director of Community Engagement*

Before joining Tenants Victoria, Farah was Principal Advisor, Public Affairs and Policy, at the Brotherhood of St Laurence. She was previously an Age journalist with roles including Law and Justice Editor, Social Affairs

Editor and reporter from both the Federal and Victorian parliaments' press galleries. Farah is also the Board Chair of The Social Studio, a social enterprise working with young people from refugee backgrounds. Her professional awards include selection for the International Visitor Leadership Program in the United States and a recipient of the Victorian Multicultural Awards for Excellence.

**Nick Hinneberg**, *Corporate Services Manager*

Nick has 20 years' operational management experience, in the finance industry and more recently in senior roles at Tennis Victoria including as General Manager for Operations. He is an active community volunteer, including for several suburban sporting clubs and as President of the Emerald Hill toy library network.

**Agata Wierzbowski**, *Director of Legal Services*

More than 10 years' practice experience in the community legal sector includes roles as a solicitor at the Consumer Action Law Centre, policy manager at the Women's Legal Service Victoria, and most recently as Executive Officer and Principal Lawyer at the St Kilda Legal Service. Agata's service on community boards includes at Social Security Rights Victoria. In 2015, she was awarded the Victorian Law Foundation Community Legal Centre Fellowship.

## **BOARD**

**Judith Dickson**, *Chair*

Appointed: 23 January 2017  
Qualifications: Bachelor of Arts. Bachelor of Laws, Master of Laws, Master of Adult Education (Global)  
Experience: Consultant in workplace learning. Lawyer, educator and manager with extensive experience in general legal practice, community legal practice, clinical legal education and practical legal training. Management experience at a senior level including successful change management. Long involvement in community legal centres as board/management committee member and volunteer lawyer.

Special responsibilities: Chairperson, from 24 September 2018

**Haydn Calderwood**

Appointed: 4 July 2017  
Resigned: 16 December 2019  
Qualifications: Certificate of Executive Leadership and Development from Australian Graduate School of Management, member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors

**Phillip Campbell**

Appointed: 9 October 2012  
Resigned: 20 January 2020  
Qualifications: Bachelor of Engineering, member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors

**Marc Kiven**

Appointed: 19 August 2019  
Qualifications: Bachelor of Engineering (Hons), Bachelor of Commerce, Master of Business Administration

Experience: Is an experienced development, project and business manager in the construction and property development sectors; extensive experience in governance of not-for-profit organisations.

**Jiayue Li**

Appointed: 19 August 2019  
Qualifications: Bachelor of Laws/Commerce, Master of Laws

Experience: Is an experienced legal and corporate advisor to senior leaders and boards in major national and international businesses to enable achievement of strategic business objectives while being guided by a strong governance and values framework. Special responsibilities: Member of the Audit, Finance and Risk Committee

## **Andrew Ogbourne**

Appointed: 5 March 2018

Qualifications: Bachelor of Science (Physics and Computing), member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors

Experience: Information technology consultant and leader with extensive experience leading IT in public, private and non-profit sectors, with a particular focus on health and community services. Expertise in IT strategy, governance, project delivery and operational management. Also experienced in risk management, procurement and organisational change beyond the IT domain.

Community organiser: founded Pentridge Community Garden as a hub for urban residents in Melbourne's north.

Special responsibilities: Chair of the Audit, Finance and Risk Committee

## **Colin Prasad**

Appointed: 20 April 2020

Qualifications: Bachelor of Commerce (University of Melbourne), member of Chartered Accountants Australia and New Zealand (CAANZ), Post Graduate Diploma in Corporate Governance, member of the Governance Institute of Australia

Experience: Finance professional with nearly 30 years' experience in audit, industry and corporate finance roles. Extensive advice provided to not-for-profit boards.

Special responsibilities: Member of the Audit, Finance and Risk Committee

## **Agata Weizbowski**

Appointed: 21 March 2018

Resigned: 21 April 2020

Qualifications: Bachelor of Science, Bachelor of Laws (Hons), Master of Laws

## **Sarah Young**

Appointed: 19 August 2019

Qualifications: Bachelor of Arts, member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors

Experience: Is an experienced public sector manager with expertise in marketing communications, community and stakeholder engagement, and policy development across Australian and New Zealand local and state government jurisdictions.

**“Understanding, patient and very practical easy to understand advice.”**

**- Comment from client satisfaction survey**





**“It’s one of the few organisations that is able to support access to safe housing, and increase housing.”**

- Comment from client satisfaction survey

## CONNECT WITH TENANTS VICTORIA



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## CONTACT US

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