

ANNUAL REPORT 2023-24



**Tenants
Victoria**

Safe, secure and affordable
homes for Victorian renters
in a fair housing system



About Tenants Victoria

Tenants Victoria is the peak body for the state's renters, who number almost 2 million people. Our vision is for safe, secure and affordable homes for Victorian renters in a fair housing system. For many, renting is a permanent situation rather than a transition from the family home to home ownership. We believe all renters should be able to afford a home that allows them to live full lives and contribute to their communities.

Founded in the 1970s by renters, we aim to empower all renters and make sure their voices are heard in our advocacy. We work in partnership with other community legal centres and housing sector organisations, and strategically with government to inform policy development and enhance service delivery.

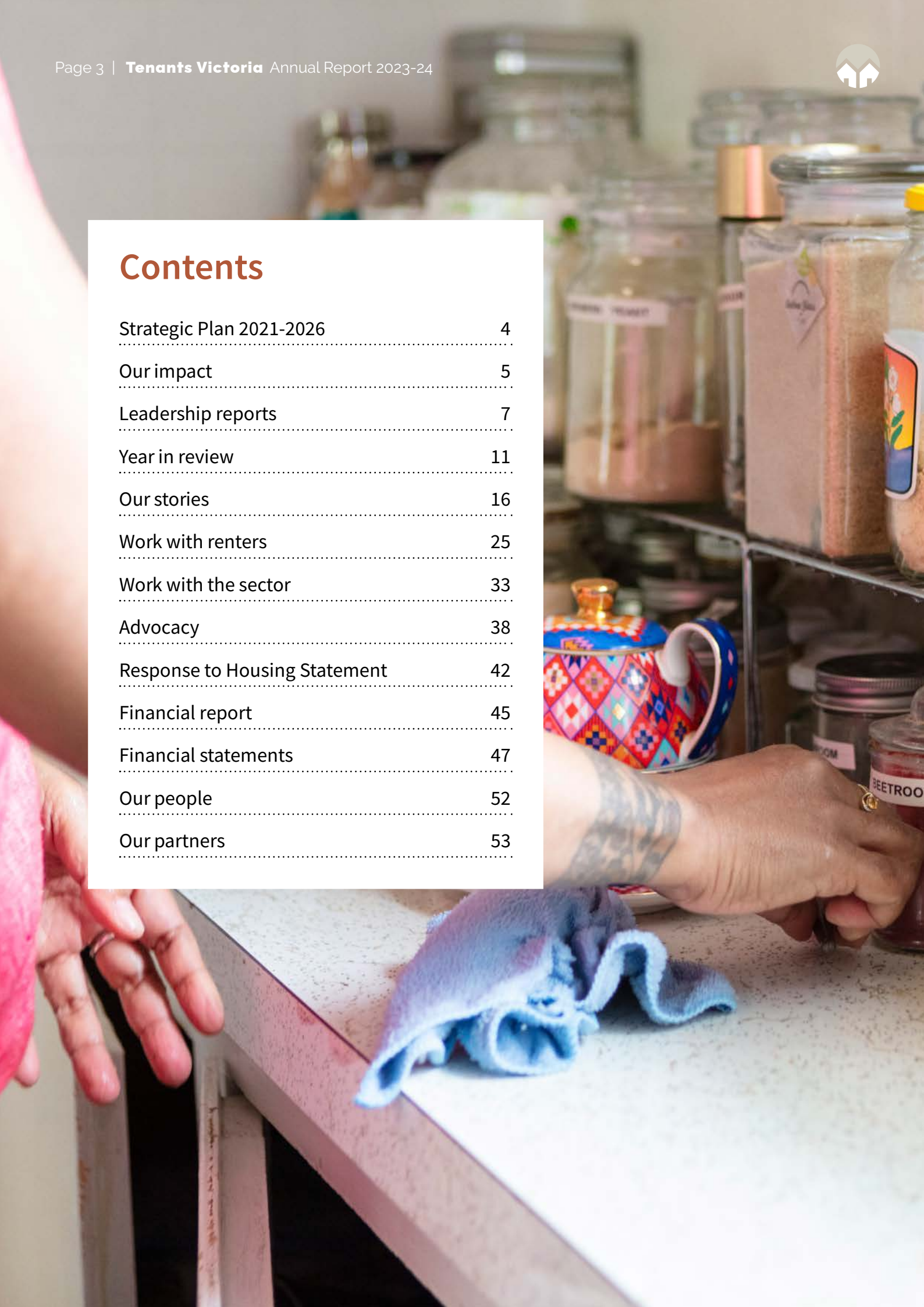
Our services include information, legal representation and advice, financial counselling, and outreach. We aim to make the housing system fairer in several ways. We advocate for practices and attitudes that respect renting and for policies and laws that support the rights of renters. We increase the skills of the community workers who assist renters. We provide information that encourages rental providers and real estate agents to act responsibly.

Our offices are on Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Country. Our work gives us a special insight into the value of place and home, and we respect the Wurundjeri people's ongoing connection to Country, culture and community. We also acknowledge the connection of all First Nations peoples on whose Country Victoria is today situated. We recognise that sovereignty was never ceded and pay our respects to Elders past and present.



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Strategic Plan 2021-2026

The renting crisis and the Victorian Government’s Housing Statement in September 2023 led us to review our Strategic Plan. This review will see us through to 2026.

Our vision	Safe, secure, and affordable homes for Victorian renters in a fair housing system.			
Our role	Empower renters and make the housing system fairer.			
Strategic goals	1. Service Excellence. Renters and their support workers are emboldened by the knowledge, support and training we provide.	2. System Impact. Our casework and policy advocacy create system-wide change.	3. Business Transformation. We have the systems, processes and culture that support us to pursue excellence.	4. Organisational Sustainability. We are effectively governed and managed using sound practices and principles.
KPIs	We can measure our responsiveness to demand and have a plan to increase it.	We can measure our impact and have a plan to improve it.	Our stakeholders and partners rate our performance as ‘strong/very strong’.	80% of our people report that they are engaged and enjoy wellbeing at work.
Strategic priorities	Service Maturity: We will use existing services and funded projects to grow and improve services, consolidate systems and processes, modernise the service model, leverage digital technology, and make sure that renters are at the centre.		Data Competence: We will improve our understanding and use of data to guide our work and decision making.	Advocacy: We will consolidate and broaden our reach to build credibility and ensure systemic change.
Objectives	OBJECTIVE 1: We provide renters with the knowledge and support they need, when they need it. OBJECTIVE 2: We train and support tenancy workers so they can provide better support to renters. OBJECTIVE 3: We collaborate with partners to develop and enhance the services we provide.	OBJECTIVE 4: We have annually agreed strategic priorities for our media strategy, advocacy plan and casework. OBJECTIVE 5: We collaborate with key stakeholders to leverage our expertise and work for broad impact.	OBJECTIVE 6: We understand both the problems renters face and the effectiveness of our responses to those problems. OBJECTIVE 7: Our services, systems and processes are designed to meet the needs of the people we serve. OBJECTIVE 8: We have a highly engaged and energetic workforce that enables our service delivery model.	OBJECTIVE 9: We are efficient and responsible stewards of the organisation’s resources now and for the future. OBJECTIVE 10: We implement systems and frameworks to ensure continuous improvement and quality services.
Our values	Collaborative	Optimistic	Effective	Kind





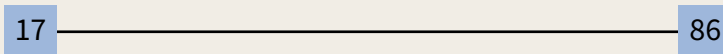
Our impact

Renter profiles



- Financially disadvantaged 41.9%
- Chronic ill-health and disability 22.5%
- Language other than English 10.2%
- At risk of or experiencing domestic violence 4.8%
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander 3.4%
- At risk of or experiencing homelessness 1.8%

Age range - We helped renters ranging from 17 to 86 years of age.



Intake and legal services

We helped 6518 renters in 8275 matters

Rooming house outreach

We helped 95 residents, including 175 referrals to other services

Training

We conducted 32 training sessions for community workers, totalling 1429 attendances

Financial counselling

We helped 239 renters in 280 matters

Advice to community organisations

We provided legal information or advice to 489 community organisations in 1023 matters

Community connections

We engaged with 276 community leaders and grassroots organisations

Issues renters contacted us about

Website

Topics	Views
Ending your lease	87,930
Rental home is being sold	71,508
Lease breaking	65,424
Moving out	63,413
Notice to vacate	60,206
Repairs and maintenance	52,084
Compensation for renters	51,107
Bonds	44,504
Lease transfers and subletting	38,189
Privacy and entry	37,591



Our services

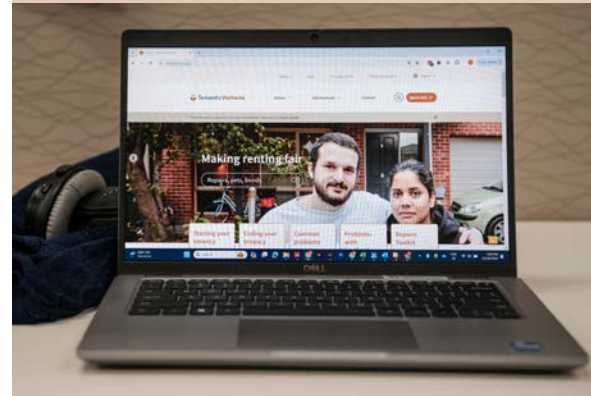
Total services **9418**

Problem type	#	%
Repairs	1603	16.6%
Notice to vacate	1530	15.8%
Bond	1150	11.9%
Renter compensation claim	877	9.1%
Rent increase	850	8.8%
Lease breaking	777	8.0%
Rent arrears	603	6.2%
Social housing	452	4.7%
Assignment	400	4.1%
Termination	307	3.2%

Website reach

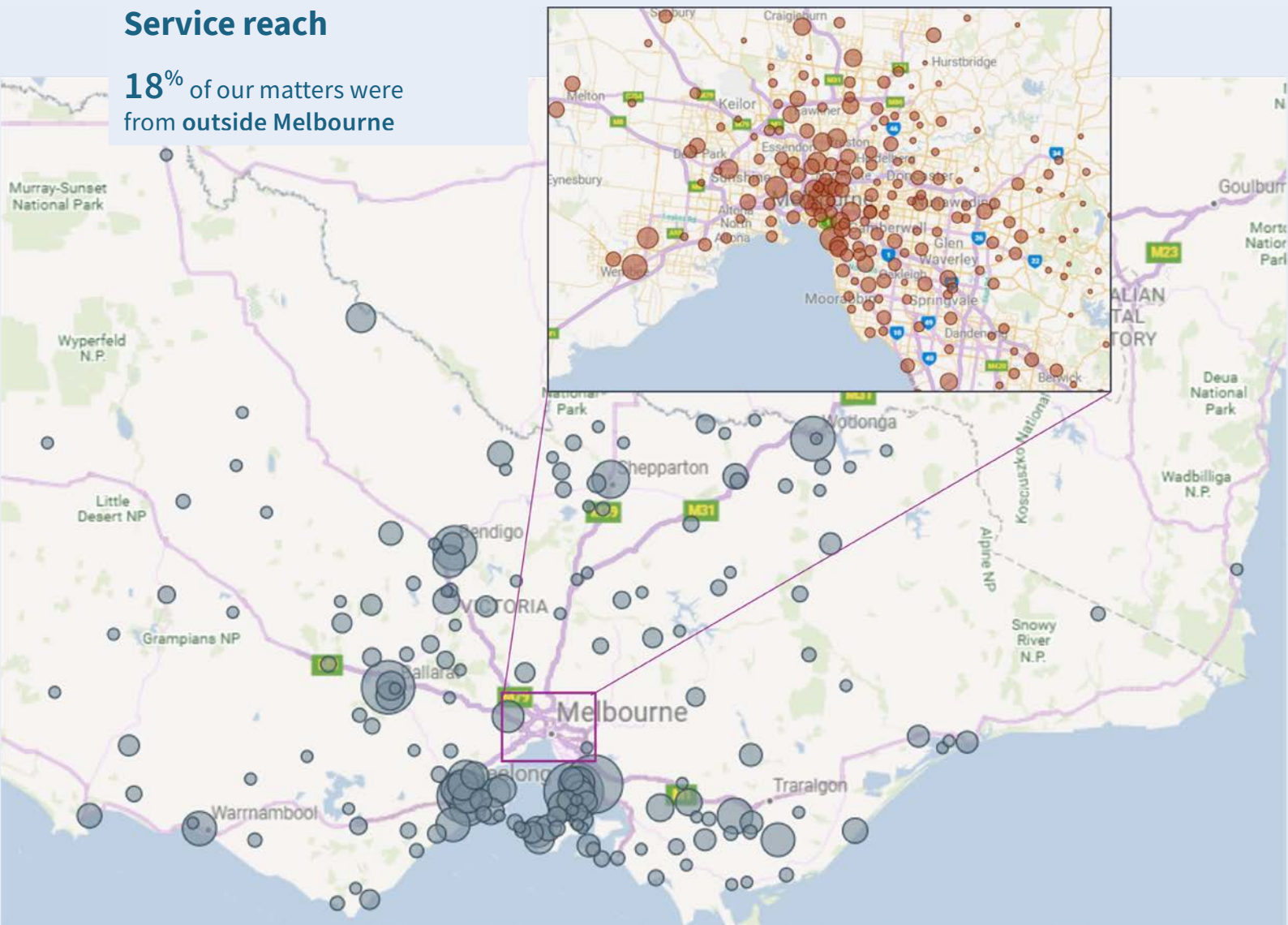
1.49 million page views

648,293 unique visitors to website



Service reach

18% of our matters were from outside Melbourne





Chair's Report

Together with my board colleagues and CEO, I am pleased to present the annual report of Tenants Victoria Ltd for the 2023-24 year.

Our Strategic Plan 2021-2026 – a time to transform continues to drive our work and reminds staff and board members every day of our guiding purpose. During March and April 2024, the board, with CEO and senior management, and building on the experiences and insights from staff, engaged in a review of the plan. The review process allowed for reflection on the achievements and challenges of the past few years.

The outcome was a re-affirmation of the soundness of the plan, while also updating the strategic priorities and KPIs for the year ahead. This gives new focus to board, management and staff as we collaborate to achieve our purpose.

Sadly, the rental landscape in Victoria continues to worsen. However, Tenants Victoria has successfully pursued initiatives to extend the reach of its services and support to more individuals and groups within the community of both public and private renters. Harnessing the power of digital technology is critical and the launch of the Repairs Toolkit in October 2023, the ongoing development of our online training and information resources, the winning of major grants to develop a Renter Stress Hub and other projects, are directed to increase access to advice and information.

Aligned with our services and strategic vision, Tenants Victoria continued its strong and evidence-based advocacy to government(s) on policy reform. We also continued our research work and plan to extend this to support reform.

In 2023-24, the Board continued to encourage and support an holistic approach to achieving our strategic goals, recognising the multiplicity of factors leading to rental stress and disadvantage. We are pleased to have extended our outreach into new and emerging communities and to increase our ability to offer financial counselling to renters in need.

The Board is very grateful for the continued and increasing support of our funders in another year of great change: Consumer Affairs Victoria, the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing, Victoria Legal Aid, the Financial Counselling Foundation, the Victorian Legal Services Board and Commissioner, the Victorian Property Fund, Victoria Law Foundation, and StreetSmart.

2024 is the 50th anniversary of the founding of Tenants Victoria (as the Tenants Union of Victoria) by a group of Parkville renters, frustrated by the lack of legal protection against their landlord's unfair and intimidatory practices. This beginning emphasises the grassroots foundation of Tenants Victoria and renters remain at the centre of our work. A 50th anniversary celebration event is planned for July 2024, an acknowledgement of the 50 years of activism, legal advice, information and representation, advocacy and reform activities.



Marking the leadership shown by Tenants Victoria in the rental housing space, we were delighted that the Honourable Kevin Bell, AO KC, in February accepted our invitation to become inaugural Patron of Tenants Victoria. Professor Bell is an eminent jurist and longstanding human rights advocate and most recently was a Commissioner of the Yoorrook Justice Commission.

The Board continues to monitor its performance and skillset and succession planning for board membership is an ongoing focus. With the projected resignation of 2 directors in the first half of 2024, 3 new directors joined the board in December 2023, adding new skills, experience and approaches to the collective.

I am very grateful to all my director colleagues who have devoted much time and energy to supporting and strengthening the organisation's ability to serve renters in need. As is clear from the Financial Statements in this Annual Report, Tenants Victoria is in a sound financial position with significant increase in funding for the financial year ahead. The Board is focussed on maintaining and strengthening that position.

Our CEO Jennifer Beveridge continues to lead Tenants Victoria with energy and imagination. Her principled, adaptive and expert leadership has enabled the organisation to expand and develop its services in another year of challenges and opportunities. On behalf of the Board, I would also like to thank the Senior Leadership Team for their capable and collaborative guidance of their teams and committed work for ongoing improvement in Tenants Victoria.

Finally, I express gratitude to the staff and volunteers of Tenants Victoria. Throughout the year they have embraced our vision and purpose and worked hard to provide direct services to renters experiencing disadvantage, while also advocating for systemic change. The Board acknowledges our staff's expertise and energy and their contribution, with our volunteers, to positive change for renters in Victoria.

In this time of crisis for renters, the Board, management and staff of Tenants Victoria look forward in the next year to continuing to assist individual renters and community groups across the state, and to working for broader change to help bring about our vision for a safe, secure and affordable home for Victorian renters in a fair housing system.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "J. A. Dickson".

Judith Dickson
Chair, Tenants Victoria





Chief Executive Officer's report

Renting continues to have its moment as one of the primary public policy areas in our state, and as the peak body for renters Tenants Victoria has been an authoritative advocate over the past year. We must put renters at the centre of the provision of safe, secure, and affordable housing. With close to 30% of Victorians renting their home, this public policy moment is long awaited.

Tenants Victoria welcomed the release of the Victorian Housing Statement in September 2023. Since then, our team has been an active participant, working with our sector colleagues and government, to support the implementation of the renting reforms outlined in the statement.

However, there was no relief from excessive rent increases for some people. Our data in the 2023-24 year showed that many renters have chosen to leave their homes when they are unable to afford the increases.

At a time of low vacancy rates, the issues of affordability and availability of rented housing have continued to make media headlines and been the subject of many radio, TV and digital media interviews that Tenants Victoria took part in.

Over the past year the need for information on repairs and maintenance, typically the most-searched topic on our website, was outstripped by the number of people needing information and advice on rent increases and on notices to vacate because the rental provider is selling. We will continue to advocate for a 'fairness formula' to guide the setting of fair rent increases, and work with government and the broader rental sector to use the Housing Statement reforms to improve the Victorian rental housing system.

On the national front, we continued to work with the National Association of Renters' Organisations (NARO) and developed the National Nine Principles for Strengthening Renters' Rights report. It provides a rationale for a harmonised set of guiding principles to improve rental housing across Australia and better ensure renters have access to safe, secure, and affordable homes. This work has brought together regional perspectives on renting challenges across Australia to build a strong and united voice for renters around the country.

In this state, in our role as the peak body for renters, Tenants Victoria has been participating in crucial consultations with the Victorian Government and industry stakeholders. These discussions have focused on addressing key issues affecting tenants and shaping policies that promote fair and sustainable housing practices.



Closer to home we have made progress on our Digital Front Door project, which aims to enhance accessibility and streamline services for renters. This initiative reflects our ongoing commitment to leveraging technology to improve access to information and self-help resources, improving user experience and operational efficiency.

We also established a partnership with four community legal services that provide tenancy support to develop the Renter Stress Hub for renters receiving unfair rent increases and facing eviction. The program will be rolled out in 2024-25 with our partners ARC Justice, Barwon Community Legal Service, Peninsula Community Legal Centre and WEstjustice.

In April, we celebrated a significant milestone: Marisol, our bookkeeper and payroll officer, achieved 20 years of dedicated service. Her unwavering commitment and expertise in her crucial, yet often unseen, role are deeply valued and appreciated by all of us.

As we enter our 50th year of operations in July 2024, demand for our services remains high, often exceeding our capacity to meet it. Tenants Victoria is a critical service that aims to intervene early to help people sustain their tenancies and maintain housing. So often people come to us as a last resort. Our resolve to inform and support renters is strong, and we remain committed to helping the many people for whom renting is an insecure form of housing tenure.

Thank you for your support to help us achieve safe, secure and affordable housing for all Victorians.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jennifer Beveridge".

Jennifer Beveridge,
CEO, Tenants Victoria



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Year in review





Our Reconciliation Action Plan

As a social justice organisation, we must ensure we have the understanding, skills, and attitudes to support First Nations renters in culturally safe and appropriate ways, and to establish and maintain solid partnerships.

This is the starting point that guides us on our reconciliation journey, which reached the stage of launching our inaugural *Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan*, operating from October 2023 to March 2025.

We set up a working group which meets 4 times a year to oversee our progress for the RAP, and were privileged to have Alan Brown, Ambassador, Victorian Aboriginal Health Service, join the group.

Our initial focus is to build our own awareness of the impact of colonisation and ongoing discrimination and inequality affecting First Nations renters in both social housing and private rentals. We have been doing this through staff and volunteers participating in Koori awareness training and attending National Reconciliation Week and NAIDOC Week events. Some of our staff are members of our book club, reading *Decolonising Solidarity* by Claire Land.

We also developed principles for working alongside community-controlled organisations and other First Nations-led programs and services to inform decision making about future service models and advocacy.

Read the **Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan**.





Volunteer paralegals enhance services for renters

Our groundwork to improve our volunteer induction process with a series of online training modules is reaping rewards. Each week our volunteer program now fields 25 paralegal volunteers, equivalent to 5 full-time roles.

During the year, our volunteers were mostly University of Melbourne law students on internships and Monash University law students completing clinical placements.

The volunteers' work with us in turn means we can support more renters who need individual assistance, and indeed during the year we were able to expand the operating hours for our renter phone line.

The program enables law students, practical legal trainees, and early career lawyers to develop their legal skills. More broadly, the program builds future expertise in tenancy law, benefitting the wider renter-support sector.



Volunteer paralegal John Stuckey with Managing Lawyer Georga Wootton.



Raising the renter voice in work on Housing Statement

The Victorian Government's Housing Statement, released in September 2023, aims to address key pain points for renters. Although Victoria implemented more than 130 rental reforms in 2021, further changes are urgently needed.

Tenants Victoria is keeping the renter voice front and centre in our advocacy work contributing to the implementation of the Housing Statement. We have welcomed initiatives for renters in the statement, including:

- Plans to establish Rental Dispute Resolution Victoria as a mechanism for a pathway for common rental problems to minimise escalation to VCAT, the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal
- Banning all types of rent bidding and making it an offence to accept a higher offer
- Compulsory professional development for agents and property managers

Tenants Victoria also convenes the Tenants Coordination Group (TCG) which guides the sector response to the Housing Statement and other key issues. The TCG comprises legal assistance services that are funded to assist renters.

Read more about our work on the Housing Statement on page 42.

Kevin Bell welcomed as our inaugural Patron

Tenants Victoria warmly welcomed Professor Kevin Bell as our inaugural Patron. Professor Bell's connection to us is deep as he was our first paid tenancy lawyer from 1979 to 1981, back when we were called the Tenants Union of Victoria.

He said: 'As Patron I look forward to advancing and supporting the work of Tenants Victoria in its advocacy for renters and for housing as a human right, in particular in its work addressing housing insecurity and homelessness.'

Professor Bell, a distinguished jurist and human rights advocate, was appointed as a Member of the Order of Australia (AM) in 2017 for his 'significant service to the law and to the judiciary, to native title and human rights, and the community'. In 2024 he was appointed as an Officer of the Order of Australia (AO) for 'distinguished service to the judiciary, to the law, and to human rights through education and reform'.



Chair Judith Dickson, Patron Kevin Bell and CEO Jennifer Beveridge at the launch of the Reconciliation Action Plan.



Research to build our evidence base

Tenants Victoria is building organisational capacity by expanding its research footprint to further inform advocacy and our services.

In February 2024, we partnered with the Consumer Policy Research Centre to release the *Is it liveable?* report to probe the quality of rental stock in the wake of mandatory minimum standards introduced in 2021. In a ‘mystery shop’ of 100 rental properties open for inspection the ‘shoppers’, in the guise of potential renters, checked compliance with minimum standards and other quality indicators. While a majority of homes appeared to meet standards, a significant proportion still did not.

Read the [Is it liveable? report](#).



Rental racism is when people discriminate against a renter on the basis of their ethnicity – and renters tell us it’s a hidden problem. In one stark example, a landlord told an African-Australian single mother of 4 that she might be hiding a larger family and threatened spot checks to verify the number of children. In the light of such disturbing incidents, we have partnered with the University of Melbourne to investigate rental racism, and especially how it affects people’s health. The research includes a survey of renters from multicultural backgrounds.

Strengthening our ties to the university sector, we have also partnered with the University of Sydney, the Tenants Union of NSW and Tenants Queensland on a pioneering project showing how digital technologies are transforming the private rental sector. A key output included the launch of a website that projected a rental market where renters have the same amount of background information on their landlord as their landlord asks of them.

To better understand the legal and service needs of single-parent renters we are also undertaking new research with the Council of Single Mothers and their Children. We interviewed single parents who had experienced a renting legal problem to investigate how, or if, they sought legal help. We will use the findings to improve our own services and our work with partner organisations for single-parent renters, to advocate for policy changes and to inform our training materials. The project was made possible by a Knowledge Grant from the Victoria Law Foundation.



Our stories





From an unregistered rooming house to a secure home

Harry, 82, has lived a full life. He worked for bookies for 50 years, raced greyhounds and in the 1960s was a trainer at various Victorian Football League clubs.

Five years ago, Harry and his partner moved to Melbourne's outer north-west because their previous rental in the inner west was too expensive. Without realising it they had moved into an unregistered rooming house. Many residents of rooming houses think they are moving into a share house, but circumstances – such as the operator deciding who moves in – are red flags that this is not the case.

After the move life took a turn for the worse. He went into hospital for a gall stone operation. When he came home, he discovered his partner had left him.

Harry tried to find more suitable housing and looked at a few private rental properties, but they were 'way too expensive and really run down'.

Tenants Victoria's Rooming House Outreach Program was notified about the property by Brimbank City Council, which was investigating it as an unregistered rooming house. There was no fire wall between the 2 sections of the property, which was a safety concern for the council.

The Rooming House Outreach Program attended the rooming house with community health service IPC Health. IPC assisted Harry with a priority application for accommodation in social housing because he was living in an unregistered rooming house at risk of imminent closure.

Our Rooming House Outreach Worker, Catherine Dyer, explored community housing options for Harry and submitted some support referrals. He was offered a one-bedroom apartment in a new community housing development in the north-east of Melbourne.

He moved into his new home in April 2024. Living in permanent community housing felt good. 'I don't have to worry about getting notice at any time,' he said.

As soon as Harry was offered the apartment, Catherine arranged a referral to the GreenLight Supportive Housing Program, which helps people who have been homeless or in insecure housing to settle into their new home and community. GreenLight has started working with Harry. It's going very well, he says.



'I don't have to
worry about
getting notice
at any time.'

Harry, Tenant



Harry with Rooming House Outreach Worker Catherine Dyer on the day he signed the paperwork for his new home.



Eviction attempt stopped at VCAT

Zhiyu, who is in his 60s, lives in Melbourne in a rental property connected to a larger house. His only source of income is a disability pension. English is his second language, and he has no-one to help him if he were to be made homeless.

The rental provider made a possession order application to VCAT under section 91ZL of the *Residential Tenancies Act 1997*, which allows a notice to vacate if the premises are unfit for human habitation or have been destroyed to such an extent that they are unsafe.

The applications were made on the basis that the property was covered in mould which could not be reached to treat properly.

This was the rental provider's second attempt in 2 months to evict Zhiyu for the same reason.

Tenants Victoria began helping Zhiyu (not his real name) after a Tenancy Assistance and Advocacy Program service referred the matter to us due to its complexity.

Zhiyu told us that there had been mould in the ceiling caused by a leak a decade ago. The leak had been fixed and the ceiling was now simply stained. There was no active mould.

Nothing had been done to fix the stained ceiling. However, after a new real estate agent took over management of Zhiyu's home, the eviction attempts started.

Tenants Victoria represented Zhiyu at the VCAT hearing, where the rental provider did not provide any evidence about the condition of the property. Tenants Victoria assisted Zhiyu to submit his own evidence about the property's condition. Our lawyer argued that the requirements to establish the grounds for section 91ZL are strict, and that no evidence had been put forward to VCAT by the opposing side to show that the property was unsafe.

The VCAT Member who heard the case dismissed the rental provider's application for a possession order.

Zhiyu wrote to us: 'Thank you for the assistance of the VCAT hearing. It was great work! Your hard work and the sense of justice and outstanding professionalism has been witnessed and appreciated. Please keep on your valuable work because there is a great need out there for the weak and vulnerable people. A just and healthy society needs the work of people like you.'



Sonny finds peace in community housing

Sonny, 60, is a Māori man who has lived in Australia for 30 years. He left school in New Zealand at 13 to work as a presser in a shearing shed. Pressers are responsible for moving sheep from outside yards to pens inside the shearing shed, so that they are ready for the shearers.

Sonny (not his real name) moved to the Australian industry after 17 years in New Zealand, working on sheep stations in the outback. 'I was part of a team that went from station to station. It has been my main work throughout my life.' However, the work was tough on his body. 'I spent 30 years doing this work. I just woke up one morning and I had had enough.'

Some people in the shearing industry used amphetamines, and Sonny ended up selling amphetamines for 6 years, with the goal of buying a house back home. Instead, his illegal activities put him in prison for 5 years.

Three years into the sentence he had a stroke and was in a medical jail facility for the rest of the sentence. 'I could hardly walk,' he said. 'When I left there, they put me in detention. I continued to work on my recovery from the stroke.' He was in detention for 2½ years 'while they worked out what to do with me'. After that, he went back to New Zealand and stayed with his sister who was dying of cancer. After his sister's death he moved back to Melbourne.

'When I got out it was really hard. Jail and detention were secure. You had a routine in these places, food, a bed, friends. When I got out everything had changed. Family had grown up, technology had changed and the people I knew had changed,' he said.

'I couldn't find housing. I didn't have any references. I had NDIS support and DSP (Disability Support Pension), but I still couldn't find anywhere to live. I ended up in a rooming house,' Sonny said.

Sonny lived in the rooming house for several years, at one stage leaving the place to live in his car. 'I was surrounded by drinkers. I never knew what was going to happen there. It was really dirty. I had to clean out the shower every morning,' he said. 'I had to hide my food or people would take it. Thankfully, I had a carer who would take me away from the rooming house. It was a relief to have someone to talk to. But she couldn't help me with housing.'

Tenants Victoria's Rooming House Outreach Worker, Catherine Dyer, met him during his second stay, finding him living in unsafe circumstances, with incidents of violence and reports of extortion. She linked Sonny with support services, and helped him with an application to the Government's public housing waiting list. They also made individual applications to community housing providers – and one of those was successful.

Sonny now lives in a studio apartment in a new community housing development.

'My new place is really good. I have my own bathroom and kitchen. It is great to clean up just my own mess. I am sleeping so much better. It is peaceful. I am free in my new place.'



Intrusive landlord sparked interest in tenancy law

Volunteer Eryi Dong has always had a positive experience with her own landlord since arriving from China with her husband in 2016. However, her decision to volunteer with Tenants Victoria was due to her best friend's experience with an intrusive landlord. The friend rented a house from a landlord who initially appeared very friendly. After the lease began, the landlord began to use pretexts to regularly visit, and inspect, the property. When her friend asked the landlord to stop visiting, the landlord threatened to evict her, alleging she was subletting.

Eryi, who was studying in the Juris Doctor course at Monash University, was about to enrol in her clinical placement, so decided to volunteer at Tenants Victoria to see if she could find a way to help her friend. After her placement began in January 2023 the first thing she did was recommend that her friend check Tenants Victoria's informative website. 'The website organises issues according to different stages of renting, making it easier for renters to identify and address their problems,' Eryi said. 'Thanks to this resource, her dispute with the landlord was resolved quickly, as the landlord realised that her threats no longer worked.'

Her interest in tenancy law developed from there. 'Working here, I found that tenancy law is more than just navigating renters through legislation, helping them understand their rights, and escalating issues to VCAT. It also involves applying practical solutions and advocating for policies that protect renters in the first place. Initially, I was surprised by the comprehensiveness and sophistication of Australian tenancy law, which covers most

aspects of renting. However, I soon found that, despite this, tenancy issues can still be challenging, as renters never face one problem at a time. Issues always come as a package, making it hard for renters to figure out what to do on their own, especially when they are under the great pressure of being evicted.

'During my placement, I also discovered that obtaining a favourable VCAT order is not always the ideal solution. Sometimes, a more practical approach can resolve issues more efficiently for renters. Therefore, I chose to stay to learn more and, hopefully, help more people.'

She works closely with Tenants Victoria's lawyers to provide casework support. This includes drafting legal documents and letters, corresponding with clients, and making referrals. She also assesses the legal validity of notices, such as notices to vacate and notices of proposed rent increases, drafts email advice and supports the VCAT duty lawyer by drafting VCAT applications, organising evidence, and taking notes during hearings.

Eryi, who grew up in Shanghai, enrolled in a law program as a second degree during her undergraduate studies in China, but had to withdraw later due to conflicts with her primary courses. 'Studying law has always been my dream because I believe that lawyers have the power to make a meaningful difference in people's lives. I never thought I would have the chance to study law again, so I feel incredibly fortunate to have had the opportunity to pursue it in Australia.'

She graduated in late 2023 and is now completing her professional legal training.



'I would love to continue my involvement with community legal centres, whether as a volunteer or in a paid position, because the work is meaningful and makes me feel that we can truly make a difference in others' lives.'

Eryi Dong, Tenants Victoria Volunteer

Eryi Dong works closely with Tenants Victoria's lawyers to provide casework support.



Housing crisis made volunteer role timely

Mitchell Coughlin grew up in a small town in the Macedon Ranges north of Melbourne, where in 2019 he graduated from his local high school, before starting a Bachelor of Laws degree at Victoria University.

‘I have always had an interest in working in law since a very young age, and a particular interest in practising as a lawyer. The major draw which attracts me to law, is the opportunity to create meaningful change by working in organisations which advocate for a cause, or support the community,’ he said.

‘My personal passions for both environmental and animal rights and advocacy has given me this sense of direction. This is why this opportunity at Tenants Victoria has been so fulfilling.’

In August 2023 Mitchell began volunteering with Tenants Victoria, which was ‘an effort to build and apply the knowledge I’d gained from my degree, and as a first step in pursuing my legal career, whilst also satisfying the internship requirements of my degree’, he said. ‘Their values were aligned with my own, and my own growing awareness of Australia’s housing crisis made this role highly interesting and timely.’

Mitchell was previously unfamiliar with tenancy law.

‘Since beginning at Tenants Victoria, and first having been confronted with the realities that so many renters are facing, this has become an area of law and a social issue that I feel personally invested in, and motivated to provide support, resources and empowerment to Victorian renters. This growing passion has been fostered by the incredible team and working environment at Tenants Victoria.’

Most recently, Mitchell worked with the new Repairs and Compensation Clinic (see page 31). ‘This has been very engaging, as I have been tasked with providing legal information to renters about their rights regarding repairs, and support to renters dealing with repairs issues.’ Mitchell assists with drafting legal documents, such as applications to VCAT for urgent repairs and compensation.

He has also worked on our general phone lines, connecting renters in the private market and social housing and community organisations seeing assistance for their clients with our services and team on many rental issues. ‘I also got the opportunity to attend VCAT hearings, which was fantastic insight into the work of the Tenants Victoria solicitors.’

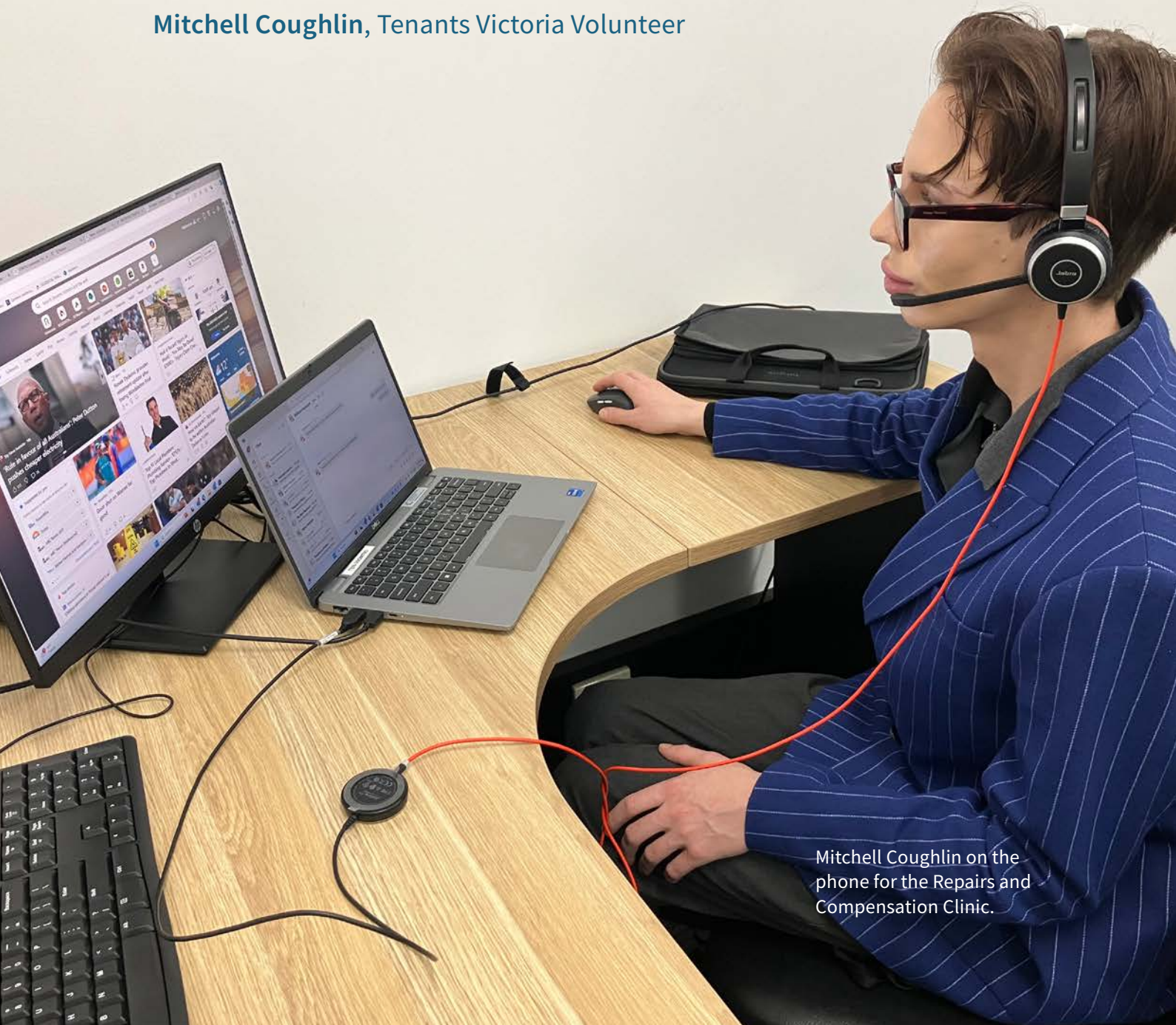
Nearing the end of his final units at Victoria University, Mitchell expects to graduate at the end of 2024.

‘This past year at Tenants Victoria has further engaged my interest to work in community law where I can give back and support causes I care about, and even to continue in tenancy law.’



'This past year at Tenants Victoria has further engaged my interest to work in community law where I can give back and support causes I care about, and even to continue in tenancy law.'

Mitchell Coughlin, Tenants Victoria Volunteer



Mitchell Coughlin on the phone for the Repairs and Compensation Clinic.



Work with renters

We provided free and confidential rental law information, legal advice and casework assistance, rooming house outreach and financial counselling services to renters across Victoria. Our expert team worked tirelessly to respond to the high demand for renter support and advice as the rental crisis continues. Our website continued to provide detailed information on a range of common issues renters need assistance with.



Individual assistance to renters

In 2023-24 our Client Services Team helped 6518 renters in 8275 matters. The 5 most common inquiries from renters were about repairs, notices to vacate the rental, bonds, compensation claims and rent increases.

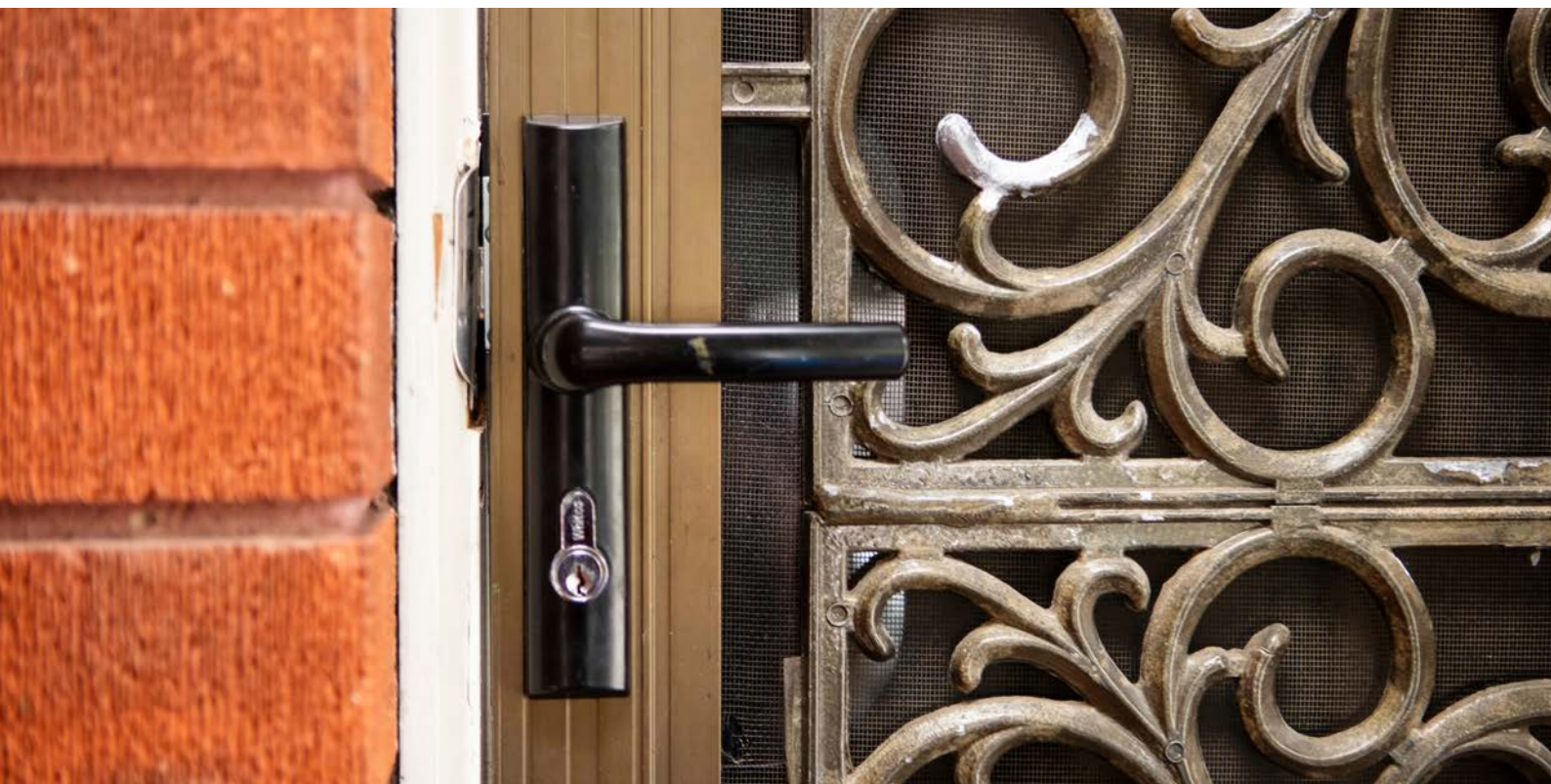
In many cases we help renters to help themselves, but sometimes more action is necessary. Our lawyers represent renters at VCAT on a weekly basis. In particular we defend many evictions due to invalid notices to vacate.

Our team also makes complaints about egregious behaviour by rental providers and agents to the Victorian Ombudsman, Consumer Affairs Victoria and the Housing Registrar for community housing. These complaints include notifications about alleged offences of the *Residential Tenancies Act 1997*.

Website updates

Our informative website provides answers to many questions people have about renting. It was visited by 648,293 people who generated 1.49 million page views. The three most-visited topic pages were on ending your lease, when the rental home is being sold and lease breaking.

New pages we added to the website included renter rights in disasters and 12 new professionally translated community-language pages with information on how Tenants Victoria can help with renting problems. Other resources added to the website included 4 lively one-minute animations that introduce topics renters often inquire about – compensation, bonds, condition reports and repairs.





Financial counselling service

Our financial counselling service continued to assist renters experiencing financial stress. This year we provided support to 239 renters experiencing financial hardship and rental stress in a total of 280 matters.

The Financial Counselling Foundation, which funds the service, engaged an independent consulting firm, ARTD Consulting, to evaluate the service. The evaluation, completed in early 2023, highlighted the success of the service for vulnerable people in the private rental market. This resulted in essential funding from the Financial Counselling Foundation being extended to December 2025.

The foundation also provided additional funding for another part-time financial counsellor, working 3 days a week.

In October 2023, our Financial Counsellor, Jacinta Morris, presented a training session with our Lead Lawyer for Community Education, Ben Cording, at Financial Counselling Victoria's annual conference. The session provided a refresher to financial counsellors on rental law changes and strategies to support renters experiencing rental stress.

Lead Lawyer for Community Education Ben Cording and Financial Counsellor Jacinta Morris at Financial Counselling Victoria's annual conference.





Outreach to diverse communities

We aim to better respond to the challenges faced by multicultural communities across Victoria, by improving access to Tenants Victoria’s resources and increasing awareness of rental rights and our legal services.

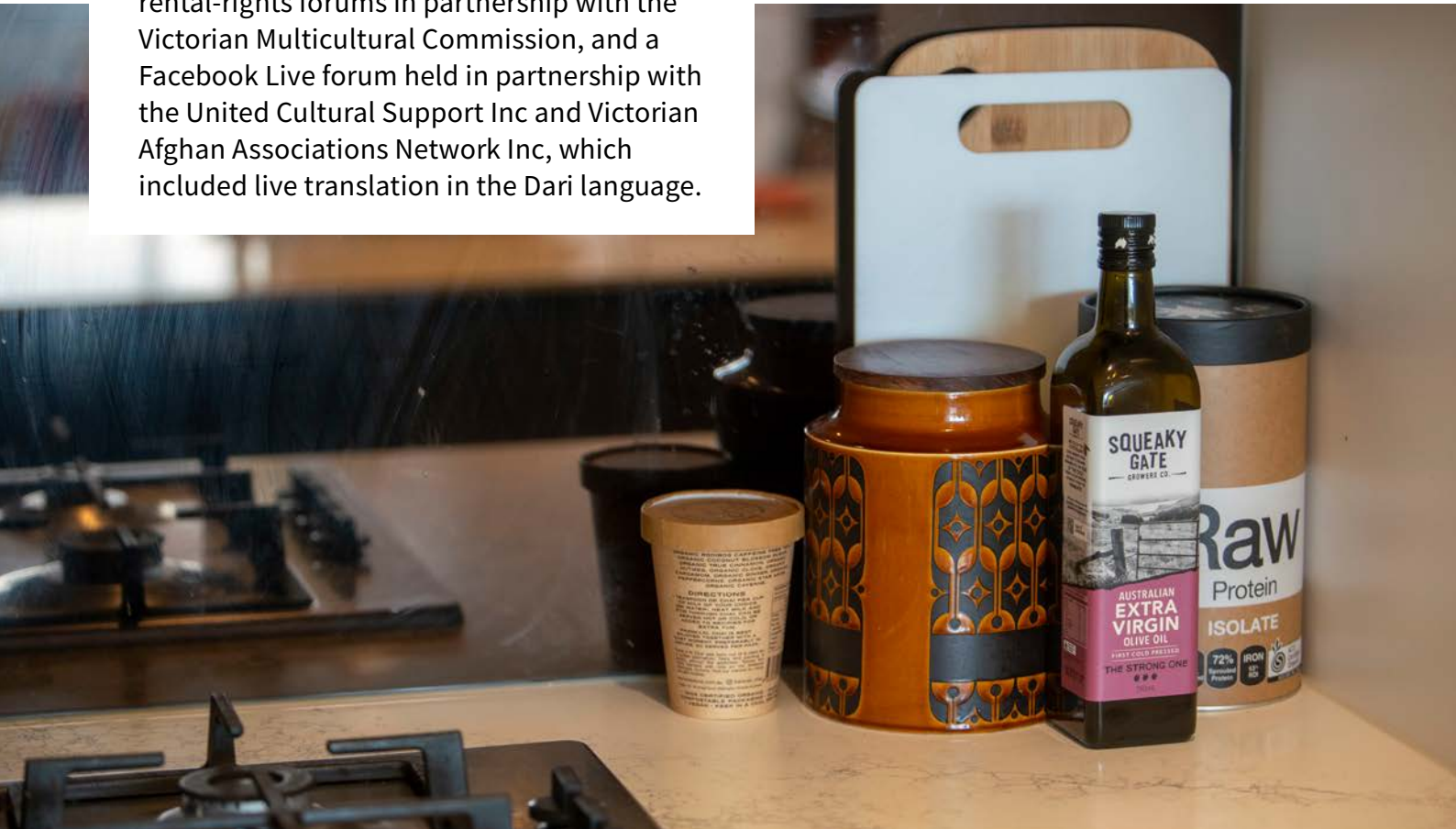
Our multilingual community engagement team – fluent in community languages Cantonese, Dinka, Mandarin, and Malay – are key connectors to culturally diverse renters. Their extensive outreach work connects renters with information, self-help resources and, when needed, referrals to supports such as Tenants Victoria’s frontline services or the network of Tenancy Assistance and Advocacy Program services.

Through our outreach, awareness building and trust building activities, we engaged with 276 community leaders and grassroots organisations during the year.

Our outreach included 3 large online rental-rights forums in partnership with the Victorian Multicultural Commission, and a Facebook Live forum held in partnership with the United Cultural Support Inc and Victorian Afghan Associations Network Inc, which included live translation in the Dari language.

We held 15 small-group discussions with grassroots multicultural community groups that have the greatest need. Other sessions included introductions to renting in Victoria for international postgraduate students at the University of Melbourne. All up we recorded 1752 attendances at 25 community sessions.

In August 2023 we successfully concluded the My Renting Rights project, which amid the rental crisis targeted the 80,000 private renters in the rapidly growing Wyndham local government area. The project was made possible through a collaboration with the Wyndham Community & Education Centre (Wyndham CEC), WEstjustice and Wyndham City Council, which supported us with a grant. The final workshop, held at Wyndham CEC, featured live Karen translation to assist Burmese renters, many of whom had been unaware of their rental rights.





Outreach to rooming houses

Our Rooming House Outreach Program supports rooming house residents in the north and west of Melbourne in partnership with local health and community services. The program helped 95 residents, including 175 referrals to other services in 2023-24.

Residents of rooming houses are among the most disadvantaged renters in Victoria. As they are often in poor health, where possible the program visits properties with health workers from local community health services.

Our rooming house outreach worker Catherine Dyer has observed that residents often spend more than 60% of their low incomes on rent. Rising food costs mean that the remaining income does not stretch as far, so people must choose between food and health costs.

This year a grant from StreetSmart paid for food vouchers, which enabled residents to have the extra money to in turn pay for much needed medication, medical appointments and essential clothing as well as food.

The Rooming House Outreach Program distributed 109 StreetSmart food vouchers to 82 residents, one third of them women. Some residents received 2 vouchers and in one case 3 because of additional challenges including significant health issues. Since delivering the last of these vouchers Catherine has received more requests for further assistance.

In December 2023 Tenants Victoria launched the Rooming House Residents Handbook, a guide to the rights of people who live in rooming houses. We published it online and printed it in a convenient pocket format, which the Rooming House Outreach Program is distributing to other services and directly to rooming house residents.

We published the Rooming House Residents Handbook in a convenient pocket format.





Spreading the word in Law Week

Each year in May Law Week is an opportunity for the community to find out more about the law. For Tenants Victoria it was an opportunity to visit communities in regional Victoria.

We visited Geelong to talk about renting laws and answer renters' questions at the weekly neighbourhood dinner at the Aviary Cafe, a social enterprise of Norlane Community Initiatives. The session was in partnership with the Barwon Community Legal Service.

With Goulburn Libraries as our host, our staff also visited the Shepparton Library and the Nagambie Library to introduce Tenants Victoria and give legal advice to renters.

University collaboration for online check of notices to vacate

We partnered with a team of 8 law students from the University of Melbourne's Law Apps course, where students design, build and release a live legal expert system that can provide legal advice to non-lawyers.

The brief at Tenants Victoria was to create a tool, deploying the Josef legal-technology platform that we also used for the Repairs Toolkit, that renters can use to check if the notices to vacate from their landlords are legally valid. The students undertook all research, design and development themselves, with guidance from our lawyers, to build a tool that covers a wide range of circumstances for notices to vacate. Our lawyers are testing and refining the tool, with plans to publish it on our website.



Rental Rights Officer Tiffany Gibbons (left) and Lawyer Nellie Goldsworthy at Shepparton Library during Law Week.



Repairs Hub launched

This year we initiated the Repairs Hub to support renters with repair issues, one of the most frequent topics they need assistance with.

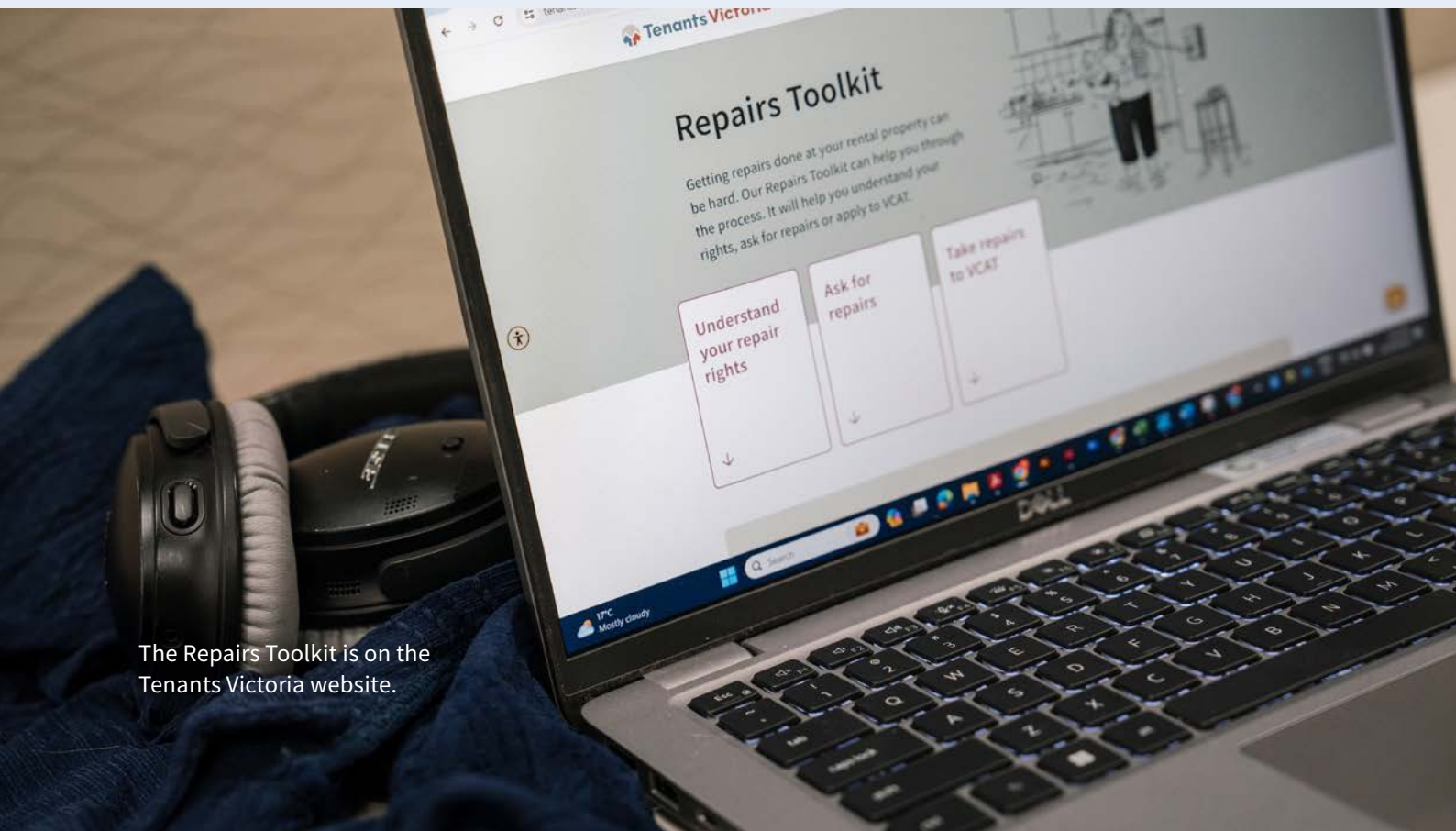
The Repairs Hub consists of the self-help Repairs Toolkit on our website and a dedicated phone information service, the Repairs and Compensation Clinic. The project was made possible by a grant from the Victorian Legal Services Board and Commissioner.

We launched the Repairs Toolkit on the first Monday in October in 2023, which is International Tenants Day. It uses the Josef legal technology platform to help renters understand their rights and guide them through the process of writing to their landlord to request repairs or making an application to VCAT for an order to get repairs done.

By the end of the 2023-24 year some 4372 sessions had been recorded on the Repairs Toolkit, and we began surveying users on how similar tools on other renter issues might be used in the future.

For renters who need individual assistance, the Repairs and Compensation Clinic, launched in March 2024, harnesses the power of 6 members of our committed team of volunteers to provide detailed information over the phone about their rights.

Volunteers also prepare documents and forms for renters to give to their rental providers and assist with drafting VCAT applications.



The Repairs Toolkit is on the Tenants Victoria website.



'The need for a tenancy tribunal that is independent, holistic in its approach to problem solving and is legally bound to meeting their obligations to the community, **is absolutely necessary** to prevent the rise in homelessness.'

Renter comment from client survey



Work with the sector





Legal advice for community workers

Our lawyers provided high level service to community workers who assist renters.

This included legal advice, guiding workers through procedures such as applying to VCAT, and discussing strategies about the steps renters can take to achieve the best possible outcomes in rental disputes.

In 2023-24 our lawyers assisted 489 community organisations in 1023 matters. Being able to connect directly with workers assisting renters has many benefits, particularly when a renter has more than one significant issue affecting their lives.

In one instance the Migrant Information Centre (Eastern Melbourne) contacted us about a client facing a frivolous bond claim from their real estate agent, following a training session the centre co-hosted with Tenants Victoria in Box Hill for the Karen community. We helped by requesting a phone hearing, as the renter was unable to attend the hearing in person, and also asked for a Karen interpreter. We also sent VCAT evidence on their behalf. The agent withdrew the claim before the matter went to the hearing, so the renter got the bond back in full.

Community workers can book an appointment with us easily online through our new appointment portal, one of the year's innovations on our website.

Tenancy Coordination Group

Tenants Victoria continued to convene the Tenancy Coordination Group (TCG), a group of legal assistance organisations that have significant expertise in residential tenancies legal practice and policy.

The TCG coordinates and advocates on strategic legal and policy issues impacting on Victorian renters. Its members include place-based and statewide legal services.

Our work over the past year focused on identified improvements to the *Residential Tenancies Act 1997*, advocacy for and implementation of the Victorian Housing Statement, and strategic advocacy for service system improvements.



'I really appreciated the support and legal advice through my VCAT matter last year.'

Renter comment from client survey





Training

Amid the uncertainties of the renting crisis, Tenants Victoria's training program continued to be well subscribed by workers. The shift to online delivery is now a permanent feature of our offer, and aligns with the preferences of our participants across the state.

We offer a calendar of 'live' tenancy-law training sessions via the Zoom platform with the goal of building sector capacity and educating participants on the rental legal landscape. These included ongoing training for workers from community legal centres and other community organisations, particularly those that deliver the Tenancy Assistance and Advocacy Program (TAAP) for Victorians in private rentals and Tenancy Plus services for renters in social housing. Topics this year included lease-breaking, repairs and compensation. We use feedback to plan future topics and improve the training sessions.

After the session participants receive detailed slide packs and videos of the presentation. TAAP workers can also complete modules in Tenants Victoria's internal learning management system, on VCAT, lease breaking, legal compensation, repairs and an introduction to the *Residential Tenancies Act 1997*.

Our calendar also included induction training on tenancy law for workers new to the sector, which was delivered as demand required. These aim to provide a foundational understanding of the Residential Tenancy Act, and how they apply to the role of a tenancy worker.

Tenancy workers from across Victoria attended our Community of Practice sessions.





We also provided smaller professional development sessions for TAAP workers under our Community of Practice umbrella. These sessions occurred 3 times over the year, comprising 2 online sessions and one in person at Tenants Victoria's office, for which workers travelled from across Melbourne and the state, from as far afield as Mildura.

These meetings enable learning, professional exchange and networking and provide workers a 'safe space' to share hopes, disappointments and insights. Key insights shared at the meetings included:

- Renters, from aged pensioners to young people, are facing the risk of homelessness, and more people say they are returning to share houses through necessity, not choice
- Rent increases are a key cost-of-living challenge that low-income households especially grapple with

All up, we conducted 32 training sessions for workers, totalling 1429 attendances.

Throughout the year organisations we collaborated with to provide training included Victorian Council of Social Service (VCOSS), Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service, and the Women's Legal Service Victoria (WLSV). We collaborated with the WLSV to co-ordinate and deliver MARAM (Multi-Agency Risk Assessment and Management) family violence training for TAAP workers.





Advocacy



Director of Community Engagement
Farah Farouque (with microphone)
at Roundtable with Attorney General
Jaclyn Symes hosted by the Federation
of Community Legal Centres.



Public outreach

The ongoing rental crisis has intensified demand for our public commentary, and we have seized the multitude of opportunities to share our analysis and stories of the challenges renters in the community are facing.

Tenants Victoria's mainstream media presence has helped us elevate issues to policy makers as part of our change agenda to improve rental laws and address systemic issues in the housing system.

Tenants Victoria's expertise was featured in at least 429 reports in television, radio, online and newspaper outlets.

That included reports on websites and newspapers such as the Herald Sun, The Age, news.com.au, yahoo!news, Guardian Australia and ABC News, television news programs including the national Seven Weekend Sunrise program, Channel 9 news and SBS news, and radio programs on 3AW and ABC Victorian and national radio. One of the renter stories we identified even made it to the BBC news website and a global audience.

The joint report we released with the Consumer Policy Research Centre, *Is it liveable? A mystery shop of private rental properties*, achieved an unprecedented national splash.

We recorded 278 media reports from across Australia about the key findings, which included that some of 100 rental properties visited for the report fell short of the state's mandatory minimum standards introduced in 2021. Media uptakes ranged from ABC's national The World Today program, Bendigo Advertiser, the 3AW Mornings program and the Drive program on ABC Melbourne and across Victoria.



All our social media platforms, Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn and X (formerly Twitter), also proved to be valuable tools in promoting issues of concern to renters and, importantly, referring people back to practical information on our website.

Our total reach on Facebook was 170,100 people. The most viewed post, seen by 9500 people, was about our Repairs Toolkit, which was launched during the year. On X our posts were seen 117,849 times. On Instagram, the most viewed post, seen by 3097 people, advertised a winter forum on topics such as energy efficiency and mould. In total our posts on Instagram reached 18,900 people.

At the end of the 2023-24 year our monthly Renters Review newsletter, targeting policy makers as well as renters, had 7265 subscribers.

In December 2023 we also launched the Multicultural Matters newsletter targeting renters and workers who support them that are connected to migrant communities.



Policy outreach

Tenants Victoria's policy and advocacy footprint is necessarily expanding as renters face difficulty in a capricious private rental market.

A chronic shortage of affordable rental homes remains a systemic challenge for our housing system, exacerbated by the long shadow of the COVID-19 pandemic. Crises in housing availability and affordability have been decades in the making, and we argue that all tiers of government must concentrate effort on this deep challenge. Greater investment in the tenancy support sector, meanwhile, is urgently needed for remediation.

We launched the year by making 15 recommendations in our submission to the Victorian Parliament Inquiry into the Rental and Housing Affordability Crisis in Victoria to improve the rental housing system. CEO Jennifer Beveridge, along with Director of Community Engagement Farah Farouque and Director of Client Services Amy Frew, also presented in person to the Legislative Council's Legal and Social Issues Committee, where we reiterated how housing must be treated as an essential service and human right.

A number – though not all – of the key points raised in our recommendations were subsequently addressed in the context of the Housing Statement delivered by the State Government in September 2023. A glaring omission is that under the *Residential Tenancies Act 1997*, however, there is no fixed formula to calculate a rent increase. We will continue to speak up about this issue.



CEO Jennifer Beveridge (centre) with Director of Community Engagement Farah Farouque (left) and Director of Client Services Amy Frew (right) at a hearing of the Victorian Parliament inquiry into the rental and housing affordability crisis.

Meanwhile we have forged a good relationship with the new Minister for Consumer Affairs, Gabrielle Williams, who stepped into the role in October. Ms Williams visited Tenants Victoria headquarters in January where she met with senior staff and listened in on renter calls to our advice line.

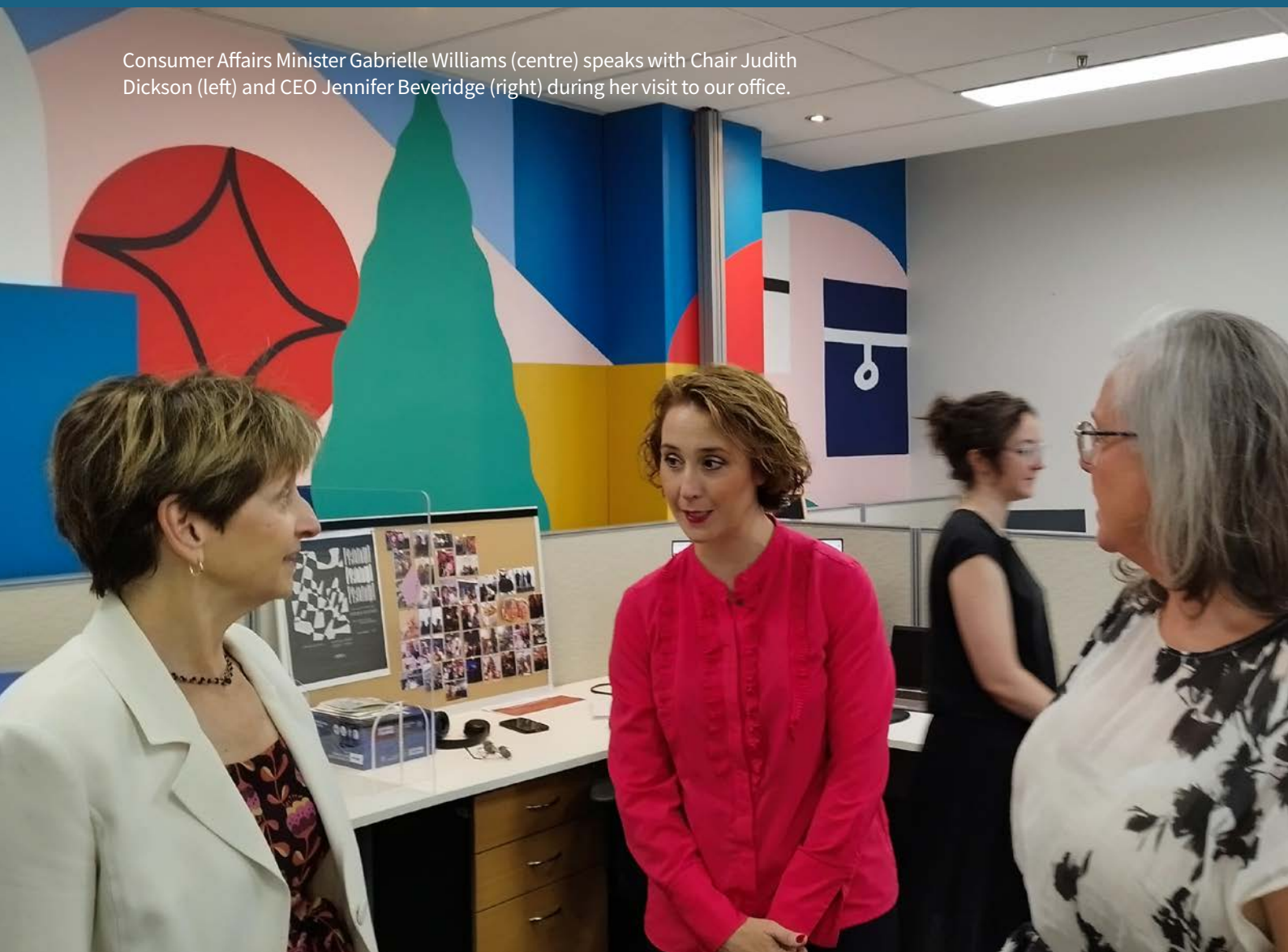
In the federal sphere, we presented twice to the Senate Community Affairs Committee inquiry into the rental crisis. Tenants Victoria's evidence was cited in the interim and final reports of the committee. Tenants Victoria is an active member of the National Association of Renters' Organisations (NARO), the umbrella organisation for state and territory tenant advice services across Australia, and our CEO represents tenancy issues on the National Shelter council.



'It would be good to have a register of problematic rental providers, to see how many queries come in about actions by same rental provider from multiple tenants.'

Renter comment from client survey

Consumer Affairs Minister Gabrielle Williams (centre) speaks with Chair Judith Dickson (left) and CEO Jennifer Beveridge (right) during her visit to our office.





Response to Housing Statement

In September 2023, the State Government launched *Victoria's Housing Statement: The decade ahead 2024-2034*. The launch – then Premier Daniel Andrews' last major policy announcement – marked a new point in Victoria's response to the ongoing housing and rental crisis, acknowledging more action was needed to deliver safe, secure and affordable homes and support communities, now and in the decades ahead.

The Housing Statement targeted 5 critical areas of reform:

- Reforming the planning system and aspects of the building industry so more houses are built, faster
- Encouraging more intensive, well-designed housing, with the right infrastructure, closer to transport, jobs, and education
- Protecting renters' rights and resolving tenancy disputes faster
- Increasing the number of social and affordable homes. This included the announced demolition and redevelopment of 44 public housing towers to provide more housing and an uplift in social housing
- Updating Plan Melbourne to cover the whole state (Plan Victoria), with a focus on delivering more homes near transport, job opportunities and essential services in the decades ahead

Long standing advocacy by Tenants Victoria alongside the broader tenancy sector had previously called for a comprehensive and multi-faceted response to Victoria's worsening housing crisis.



Farah Farouque, Director of Community Engagement, represented Tenants Victoria at Premier Daniel Andrew's regional launch of the Housing Statement in Wonthaggi.



Our CEO, Jennifer Beveridge commented: 'The Housing Statement represents a significant opportunity for Tenants Victoria, as the peak body and statewide legal help service for renters, to work with ministers for Housing and Consumer Affairs and their departments, to play a strategic role in developing these key reforms, informed by renter experiences we have tracked in the community.'

As a key community stakeholder, Tenants Victoria has been working with the Department of Government Services as it scopes the reforms to protect renters' rights and resolve tenancy disputes faster. With half a million visits to our website and advising renters in 8275 matters this year, Tenants Victoria has been well placed to provide robust advice to government on:

- Establishing Rental Dispute Resolution Victoria as a mechanism for early intervention for common rental problems such as repairs and bonds
- Banning landlords from raising rents for 12 months after evicting the previous tenant at the end of their first fixed-term lease
- Banning all types of rent bidding, making it an offence to accept bids and strengthening penalties against agents and landlords who break the law
- Introducing a scheme for rental bonds so the bond paid can simply move from one rental to the next
- Extending notification of rent increases from 60 days to 90 days
- Extending the notice-to-vacate period in some cases from 60 days to 90 days
- Standardising rental applications and building privacy safeguards
- Compulsory professional development for agents and property managers

As the State Government moves into broader consultation later in 2024, the Tenancy Coordination Group, chaired by Tenants Victoria and made up of statewide and local tenancy legal services, will facilitate broader sector feedback to inform these reforms.

Meanwhile, as the Housing Statement's public housing redevelopment rolls out, Tenants Victoria continues to work with others in the tenancy sector to continue to press for a better deal for renters. We have strongly advocated for consultation and support for affected residents and a guaranteed right of return to their original location. We have also used the announcement of more social housing to press the case for equality between public and community housing renters – to avoid further entrenching a 'two-tier' social housing sector in Victoria.

Importantly, the Housing Statement also acknowledged the need for more funding for frontline services to Victorian renters struggling with the housing and cost of living crises. Premier Jacinta Allan's first budget confirmed that Tenants Victoria, leading 4 community legal centre partners, would receive \$2 million to enhance frontline services across the state.

Work to deliver the Housing Statement will continue throughout this term of government. Tenants Victoria will endeavour to leverage the best possible outcomes for Victoria's renters.



'The Housing Statement represents a significant opportunity for **Tenants Victoria**, as the peak body and statewide legal help service for renters, **to work with ministers for Housing and Consumer Affairs** and their departments, to play a strategic role **in developing these key reforms, informed by renter experiences** we have tracked in the community.'

Jennifer Beveridge,
CEO Tenants Victoria



Financial report

This financial year has continued the positive momentum established in the financial year 2022-23 for Tenants Victoria, culminating in a surplus of \$128,449 – an increase of \$57,000 compared to the previous year.

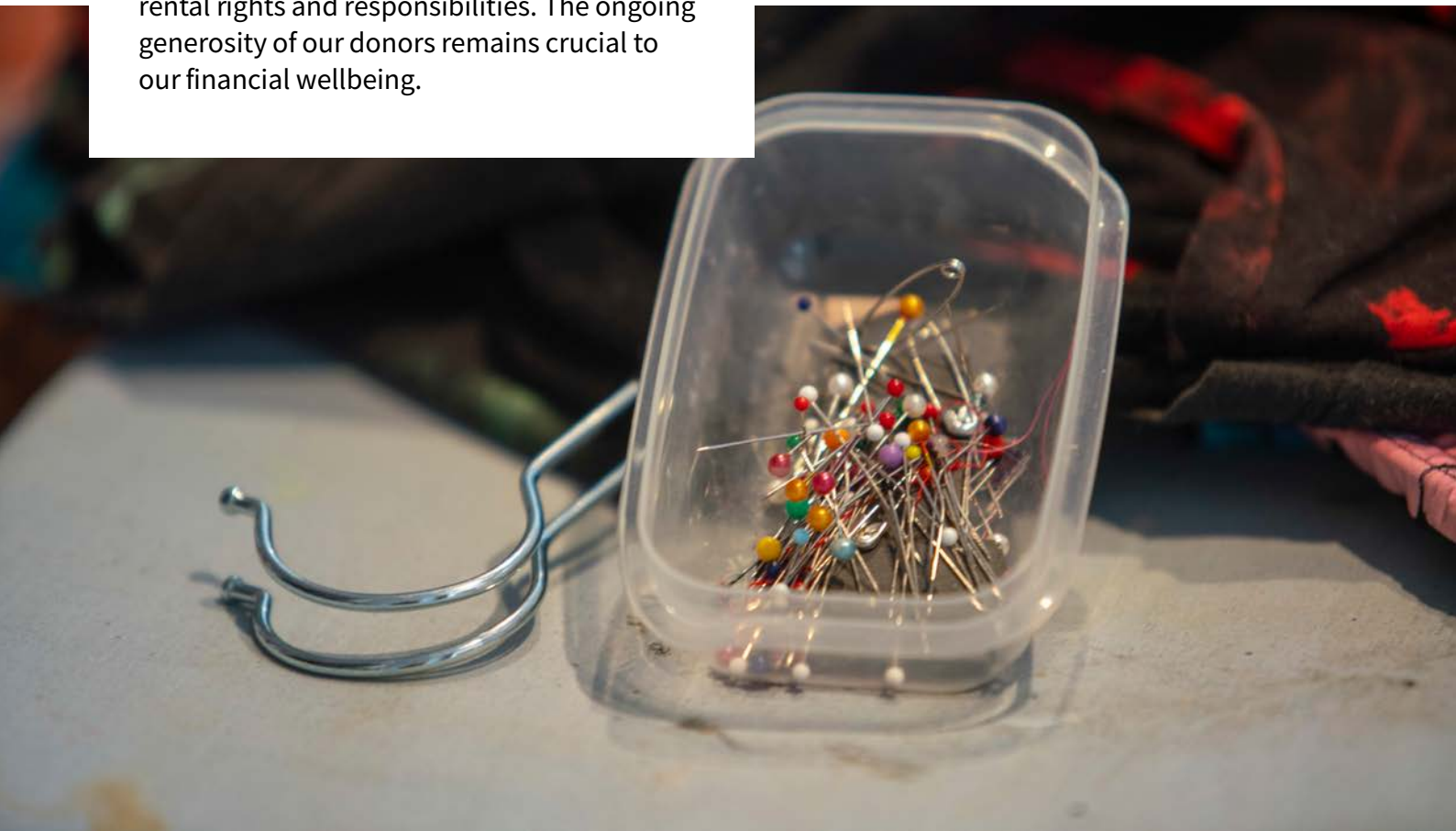
Key financial outcomes

Total revenue reached \$3.96 million, an 8% increase from the previous financial year. This growth is attributed to strengthened relationships with key funding bodies, including Victoria Legal Aid, the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing, Consumer Affairs Victoria, the Financial Counselling Foundation, and the Victorian Legal Services Board and Commissioner, whose support contributed to 98% of our revenue.

We are pleased to welcome Victoria Law Foundation and StreetSmart Australia as new partners. Additionally, our revenue streams have diversified through enhanced collaborations with universities and other organisations to deliver training sessions on rental rights and responsibilities. The ongoing generosity of our donors remains crucial to our financial wellbeing.

Expenses for the year totalled \$3.83 million, a 7% increase from the previous financial year. Staff remuneration and benefits remain our largest expense at \$2.97 million, a slight rise from \$2.79 million in the previous financial year, but consistent as a percentage of total expenses at 78%.

Our commitment to organisational improvement was reinforced through substantial investments in key strategic initiatives, including the Volunteer Induction Program, Training Program, and Digital Strategy Program.





These investments increased to \$122,000 from \$71,000 in the previous financial year and accounted for 59% of the full-year Organisational Improvement and Consultancy Expenses. All projects were completed as planned, delivering tangible benefits that support our long-term growth and sustainability.

As of June 2024, Tenants Victoria's cash reserves stand at \$2.50 million, a 33% increase from 2022-23. This growth is primarily due to higher Grants in Advance, which are expected to be utilised as funded projects progress over the next two financial years. We have managed our cash reserves conservatively, maintaining them in daily transaction accounts and short-term savings accounts to meet future operational and strategic needs.

Building on the budget and variance reporting system introduced in 2022-23, we further advanced our internal processes by implementing a universal template for grant applications in 2023-24. This enhancement significantly improves our resource allocation and financial accountability.

In summary, Tenants Victoria has demonstrated strong financial performance in 2023-24. Our dedication to effective financial management and strategic investment positions us well for continued growth and success.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jason Yao'.

Jason Yao, CPA
Chief Financial Officer
Tenants Victoria





Statement of Profit or Loss and Other Comprehensive Income

for the year ended 30 June 2024

	2024 (\$)	2023 (\$)
Revenue from continuing activities	3,959,763	3,651,131
Employee benefits expense	(2,921,730)	(2,742,502)
Information and communications technology expenses	(170,274)	(131,543)
Depreciation expenses	(213,342)	(205,842)
Organisational improvement and consultancy expenses	(194,919)	(118,179)
Administration expenses	(150,839)	(131,934)
Project expenses	(109,881)	(165,980)
Occupancy expenses	(21,417)	(22,505)
Library and resources	(10,945)	(21,314)
Legal fees	(7,693)	(1,455)
Interest expense	(30,274)	(37,273)
Other expenses	-	(953)
Surplus/(Deficit) before income tax	128,449	71,651
Income tax expense	-	-
Net surplus/(deficit) for the year	128,449	71,651
Other comprehensive income		
Other comprehensive income for the year, net of tax	-	-
Total comprehensive profit/(loss) for the year	128,449	71,651



Statement of Financial Position

for the year ended 30 June 2024

	2024 (\$)	2023 (\$)
CURRENT ASSETS		
Cash and cash equivalents	1,795,110	1,189,349
Trade and other receivables	47,494	33,222
Financial assets	595,077	582,832
Other current assets	129,498	49,482
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS	2,567,179	1,854,885
NON-CURRENT ASSETS		
Trade and other receivables	185,359	153,585
Plant and equipment	36,400	60,115
Right of use assets	360,144	548,045
TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS	581,903	761,745
TOTAL ASSETS	3,149,082	2,616,630
CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Trade and other payables	224,879	147,759
Tax liabilities	91,447	47,669
Provisions - employee entitlements	166,181	158,270
Lease liabilities	260,031	165,099
Other current liabilities	792,547	381,750
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES	1,535,085	900,547
NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Provisions - employee entitlements	90,597	61,101
Lease liabilities	256,637	516,668
TOTAL NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES	347,234	577,769
TOTAL LIABILITIES	1,882,319	1,478,316
NET ASSETS	1,266,763	1,138,314
EQUITY		
Retained surplus	1,266,763	1,138,314
TOTAL EQUITY	1,266,763	1,138,314



Statement of Changes in Equity

for the year ended 30 June 2024

	Retained Surplus (\$)	Total (\$)
Balance as at 1 July 2022	1,066,663	1,066,663
<u>Comprehensive Income</u>		
Surplus for the year	71,651	71,651
Other comprehensive income	-	-
Total comprehensive loss	71,651	71,651
Balance as at 30 June 2023	1,138,314	1,138,314
Balance as at 1 July 2023	1,138,314	1,138,314
<u>Comprehensive Income</u>		
Surplus for the year	128,449	128,449
Other comprehensive income	-	-
Total comprehensive profit	128,449	128,449
Balance as at 30 June 2024	1,266,763	1,266,763



Statement of Cash Flows

for the year ended 30 June 2024

	2024 (\$)	2023 (\$)
CASH FLOW FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES		
Receipts from government and other sources	4,732,340	3,953,580
Payments to suppliers and employees	(3,935,285)	(3,677,304)
Interest received	31,220	7,808
Interest paid	(30,274)	(37,237)
Net cash provided by operating activities	798,001	246,847
CASH FLOW FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES		
Payments for plant and equipment	(9,065)	(845)
Payments for term deposits	(18,076)	(3,768)
Net cash used in investing activities	(27,141)	(4,613)
CASH FLOW FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES		
Repayments of lease liabilities	(165,099)	(143,798)
Net cash used in financing activities	(165,099)	(143,798)
Net increase/(decrease) in cash held	605,761	98,436
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of financial year	1,189,349	1,090,913
Cash and cash equivalents at end of financial year	1,795,110	1,189,349



'It doesn't matter how many laws are made to protect tenant rights as long as short-term leases remain the norm, with lease renewal being at the whim of pleased or displeased landlords, and with uncapped rent increases being totally out of the hands of renters.'

Renter comment from client survey



Our people

Our Senior Leadership Team

Jennifer Beveridge,
Chief Executive Officer

Kylie Betts, Director
of People and Corporate
Services

Farah Farouque, Director
of Community Engagement

Amy Frew, Director of Client
Services (Acting)

Carman Parsons, Director
of Innovation

Agata Wierzbowski, Director
of Client Services (Leave)

Our Board

Judith Dickson, Chair
Appointed: 23 January 2017
Special responsibilities:
Chair, from
24 September 2018, and
Member of the Governance
Committee from
16 November 2020

Jolene Elberth
Appointed: 1 December 2023
Special responsibilities:
Company Secretary,
from 30 April 2024 until
10 July 2024 and Member
of the Audit, Finance and
Risk Committee, from
30 April 2024

Jiayue Li
Appointed: 19 August 2019
Special responsibilities:
Chair of the Audit, Finance
and Risk Committee

Clinton Licht
Appointed: 1 December 2021
Special responsibilities:
Chair of the Governance
Committee, resigned
19 May 2024, and Member
of the Audit, Finance and
Risk Committee, from
30 April 2024

Kristie Looney
Appointed: 1 December 2021,
resigned 26 February 2024
Special responsibilities:
Member of the Audit,
Finance and Risk
Committee, from
28 November 2022 to
26 February 2024

Andrew Ogbourne
Appointed: 5 March 2018
Special responsibilities:
Chair of the Governance
Committee, from
24 June 2024, and Deputy
Chair, from 22 May 2023

Eila Pourasgheri
Appointed: 1 December 2023
Special responsibilities:
Member of the Governance
Committee, from
27 May 2024

Colin Prasad
Appointed: 20 April 2021;
resigned 25 March 2024
Special responsibilities:
Member of the Audit,
Finance and Risk Committee

Shane (Harry) Smith
Appointed: 1 December 2023
Special responsibilities:
Member of the Governance
Committee, from 27 May
2024

Company Secretary

Bettina Wachsmuth
Appointed: 24 June 2024

Our Patron

**Professor the Honourable
Kevin Bell AO KC**



Our partners



Dexterity Law



Tenancy Coordination Group



Victorian Housing Peaks Alliance
Convened by VCOSS



'Extremely grateful that I can raise issues with Tenants Victoria.'

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(Monday to Friday 9am – 5pm)



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Design: Albie Colvin

Photo credits:

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Front cover - Lawyer Ben Cording holds an information session for members of the Karen Burmese community in Werribee co-hosted by the Wyndham Community & Education Centre. With him is settlement worker and Karen interpreter Say Htoo Eh Moero from the Centre.