

Annual Report 2025–26

Our vision is for Victorian renters to experience dignity
living in safe, secure and affordable homes.

About Tenants Victoria

Tenants Victoria is the leading voice for the state's renters. Our vision is for Victorian renters to experience dignity living in safe, secure and affordable homes. 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. We recognise the enduring connection of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to Country, and the impact of colonisation, dispossession, and systemic inequality on housing outcomes and experiences. We acknowledge that sovereignty was never ceded and commit to truth-telling, listening, and learning from First Nations communities in our work as a provider of services for renters, education and training for renting advocates and in our advocacy for improved renting systems, support and experiences.



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Chair's report

Together with my board colleagues and CEO, I am pleased to present the annual report of Tenants Victoria for 2025-26.

I joined the Board in December 2024 and am honoured to serve as Chair from March 2025.

This year marked the end of our Strategic Plan 2021-2026: A Time to Transform. The past 5 years have been foundational in building our capability and advancing the rights of renters.

Demand for renter support services has grown substantially over this time, and as more renters sought assistance, we needed to adapt our service to reflect the range of support renters need.

We expanded from offering solely legal assistance to also providing general information and advice through our phone and web chat services, as well as integrating financial counselling, social work and rooming house outreach into our service delivery.

As we looked to the future, we planned and launched our strategic plan for the next 5 years. This plan was driven by the needs of renters and the change we want to achieve – higher standards and fairer renting across Victoria. Building on our role as the leading voice for renters, and facilitating a fair housing system, we will use service excellence, influence and organisational strengths to drive this change.

This year delivered significant positive changes for renters, with new laws strengthening renters' rights and minimum standards for rental properties. Tenants Victoria has campaigned and worked with government over many years to achieve these reforms, and it was rewarding to see them enshrined in law.

Some of the reforms included removing the threat of no-fault evictions at the end of fixed-term leases, rental bidding above the advertised rent, requests for more than one month's rent in advance for most properties and the use of fee-charging rental apps.

This year we also welcomed our first Minister for Renters, Paul Edbrooke, in response to the need for a dedicated portfolio to address the needs of Victorians who rent their home.

Tenants Victoria continues to support renters to understand and assert their rights through accessible online information, engagement with community leaders and legal centres, integrated services, our renter support phone line, and legal assistance. This year, we also looked for new ways to meet demand and launched web chat functionality and our Digital Front Door website project. By providing timely, relevant and digestible information on our website, more renters can understand and advocate for their rights.

The work we do would not be possible without stable funding. The Board greatly appreciates the ongoing support of our funders in another challenging year for renters: Consumer Affairs Victoria, the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing, Victoria Legal Aid, Homes Victoria, and our other funders.

Tenants Victoria has played an active role in campaigning for these reforms and continues to advocate for changes that will improve the lives of Victorian renters.

This year the Board redeveloped its risk management framework with a stronger focus on reporting and compliance. Following good governance practice, we introduced a yearly board and chair evaluation process. We welcomed 2 new directors, Alison Wetzels and Danielle Walt, who together bring extensive experience in social justice, financial stewardship, risk management and public policy. We also farewelled Andrew Ogbourne and thank him for his contribution to the Board for the last 8 years.

I extend my gratitude to my colleagues on the Board, who contribute their extensive expertise to furthering Tenants Victoria's support for renters across Victoria and do so on an entirely voluntary basis. I have joined the Board at a time when Tenants Victoria remains in a robust financial position, which we are committed to maintaining in the years ahead.

On behalf of the Board, I also thank our CEO, Jennifer Beveridge, who has led Tenants Victoria with determination and courage for more than 7 years. Under her leadership, Tenants Victoria has successfully navigated challenges and embraced opportunities to improve outcomes for renters, always guided by the needs of renters.

Finally, thank you to the staff and volunteers of Tenants Victoria. They work tirelessly to improve outcomes for Victorian renters through our services, including phone services and website content, legal assistance and representation, education and training for workers, outreach to community groups and advocacy for systemic change. The Board and I recognise the commitment, dedication and optimism they bring to their work every day.

As the need for higher standards and fairer renting remains, the Board, senior management, staff and volunteers will continue to work towards a future where all Victorian renters can live with dignity in safe, secure and affordable housing.



Serge Sardo
CHAIR

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Serge Sardo', written over a dark blue horizontal line.

Chief Executive Officer's report

This year saw reforms we have long advocated for become a reality, creating stronger protections for many renters and a fairer experience when applying for rental properties.

The 2025-26 year was a pivotal year for Tenants Victoria. We continued our strong focus on advocacy and policy reform, including implementing innovative approaches to meet growing demand and advocating on a range of critical issues affecting renters, including the redevelopment of Melbourne's public housing towers.

We welcomed the appointment of Victoria's first Minister for Renters, Paul Edbrooke. This important appointment recognises the significant pressures facing Victorians who rent their home and the need for dedicated leadership to address these challenges.

We undertook a high profile Government Budget campaign, calling for increased investment in renter support services. Insufficient funding continues to leave many renters without access to information, support and direct service assistance. Through an integrated campaign consisting of media engagement, sector coordination, advocacy with Government and content on our communication channels, we highlighted the ongoing and urgent need for:

- Increased funding across the sector
- Fairer rent increases
- Stronger regulation and enforcement of rooming houses
- Expanded support for First Nations renters at risk of homelessness
- The application of minimum standards across all tenancies

This year also marked the implementation of Rental Dispute Resolution Victoria (RDRV), a new service designed to help resolve rental disputes early,

reducing the need for formal hearings through the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT). For reforms such as RDRV to achieve their intended impact, renters must be aware of and able to access these services. We delivered a communications campaign to raise awareness of RDRV through our website, publications and other channels, encouraging renters to understand and exercise their rights. We also participated in the Parliamentary Secretary's Implementation Advisory Group, providing oversight and advice on the delivery of RDRV and helping to ensure it delivered renter-focused outcomes. We will continue to work constructively with Government to strengthen and improve the service.

Demand for our services remains exceptionally high and continues to exceed available capacity. Throughout the year, we assisted over 10,000 renters through our renter support phone line, repairs clinic, and our legal assistance, financial counselling, rooming house outreach and social work services. We also engaged with community leaders, strengthened the capability of community legal centres and continued to build partnerships across the sector.

As demand for assistance continues to grow, accessible and reliable online information plays an increasingly important role in supporting renters. Our website provides free, timely and practical information to help renters understand their rights and options. In addition to publishing updates on legislative and policy changes, multilingual resources and engaging video content, we introduced several new digital initiatives. These include live web chat, a website redesign and a rental referral tool that enables community workers to connect clients with appropriate services more efficiently.

Knowledge sharing remains central to understanding the challenges facing renters and advocating for meaningful reform. We contributed to sector-wide research and policy discussions by drawing on insights and data from our services to help build a stronger evidence base. We collaborated with the Consumer Policy Research Centre to contribute to their report, *Setting the price: The drivers of rent increases in Victoria's private rental Market*, which found that approaches to determining rent increases vary considerably, with many focused primarily on recovering landlords' rising costs. These findings further strengthened the case for a fair and transparent rent increase formula.

This year was also an important milestone as we reflected on our previous strategic plan and developed our new Strategic Plan 2026-2031, setting a shared vision and priorities to guide our work into the future. Over the next 5 years, we will continue to drive higher standards for fairer renting across Victoria, as the centre of excellence that connects renters to support and shares insights and expertise with government, rental providers and organisations.

Our dedication to supporting renters and promoting awareness of their rights remains unwavering.

We remain committed to helping Victorian renters experience dignity. Our dedication to supporting renters and promoting awareness of their rights remains unwavering. For too many Victorians, renting remains unaffordable and insecure, furthering the need for continued reform and investment.

I commend this annual report to you and encourage you to learn more about our work with, and on behalf of, Victorian renters. Renters are at the centre of everything we do, and our vision for renters to experience dignity living in safe, secure and affordable homes continues to guide our efforts. Thank you for your ongoing support in helping us realise that vision.



Jennifer Beveridge
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading 'J Beveridge'.

Strategic plans

Our strategic plan for 2026-31

Our vision	Victorian renters experience dignity living in safe, secure and affordable homes			
Our role	The leading voice for renters, facilitating a fair housing system			
Strategy statement	We will drive higher standards for fairer renting across Victoria, as the centre of excellence that connects renters to support and shares insights and expertise with government, rental providers and organisations			
Goals	Service excellence: More renters have access to the support they need, when they need it	Influence: System change and connection that elevates the renting experience	Organisation: A capable, sustainable, relevant, focussed organisation that adopts best practices	
Measures	# renters engaging with our services % services delivered to priority cohorts - Renter feedback on service experience and outcomes - Sector feedback on impact of capacity building and sector support activities	# annually agreed advocacy goals progressed - Narrative and policy influence scorecard - Stakeholder feedback	- Staff wellbeing and engagement - ROI in new systems - Long term financial and operational sustainability	
Key initiatives	- Improve access to help, information and education for priority renter groups - Scale and innovate our services to reach more renters - Enable a better connected and more capable renter support sector	- Use our insights, data and expertise in media campaigns and policy advocacy - Elevate renter voices to inform system change - Build and maintain strategic relationships across the renting system to improve the experience of renters	- Implement a wellbeing and engagement strategy for staff and volunteers - Continuously improve our quality, finance, people and culture, and operations systems - Harness digital technology to improve access, reach and impact	
Our values	 Collaboration	 Optimism	 Effectiveness	 Kindness

Looking back at our strategic plan for 2021-26

Over the past 5 years we have strengthened our services, expanded our reach and increased our impact for renters across Victoria. We have evolved to meet changing community needs by introducing new ways for renters to access support, including live web chat, enhanced phone services, social work and financial counselling.



Priority: Service maturity

We broadened our approach beyond legal assistance alone, developing services that respond to the diverse challenges renters face.

- **New and expanded services** – Introduced financial counselling and social work programs and evolved our rooming house outreach service
- **Frontline service improvements** – Established dedicated Rental Rights Officers, redesigned phone workflows, introduced live web chat and trialled after-hours service delivery
- **Digital transformation** – Our Digital Front Door project transformed our website, making information easier to find and understand, allowing renters to self-educate and advocate
- **Building sector capacity** – Expanded our training program, increasing attendance from 2 to 5 participants per session to 30 to 50
- **Partnering to expand our capacity to help renters** – Established pro bono partnerships, volunteer programs and student placements to increase our ability to support renters

Priority: Data competence

We invested in systems and processes that improved our understanding of service demand, client outcomes and organisational performance.

- **Client management** – Implemented Actionstep software to streamline client management and support more efficient service delivery
- **Improving service insights** – Introduced the Genesys phone and web chat system, providing real-time data on demand and response times
- **Performance reporting** – Developed Power BI dashboards to support service, funding and team reporting

- **Listening to renters** – Strengthened evaluation and feedback processes across legal assistance, financial counselling, social work and information services
- **Research that drives change** – We shone a spotlight on issues that affect renters across Victoria, including research on the experiences of single parents while renting, with our *Restricted, Resilient, Resourceful: Legal help-seeking among single-parent renters* report

Priority: Advocacy

We strengthened our role as a trusted voice on renting issues and continued to contribute to policy development, sector leadership and public discussion.

- **Laws that improve renters' rights** – Contributed to reforms under the *Residential Tenancies Act 1997* (Vic) and the Victorian Housing Statement
- **New ways to resolve disputes** – Served as a trusted adviser during the development and implementation of Rental Dispute Resolution Victoria (RDRV)
- **Sector strength** – Convened and participated in key sector forums, including the Tenancy Coordination Group, Tenants Working Group and Renting Roundtable
- **Supporting multicultural renters** – Expanded our multicultural engagement network to more than 200 community leaders and organisations
- **Working towards reconciliation** – Completed our first Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) and commenced development of our Innovate RAP

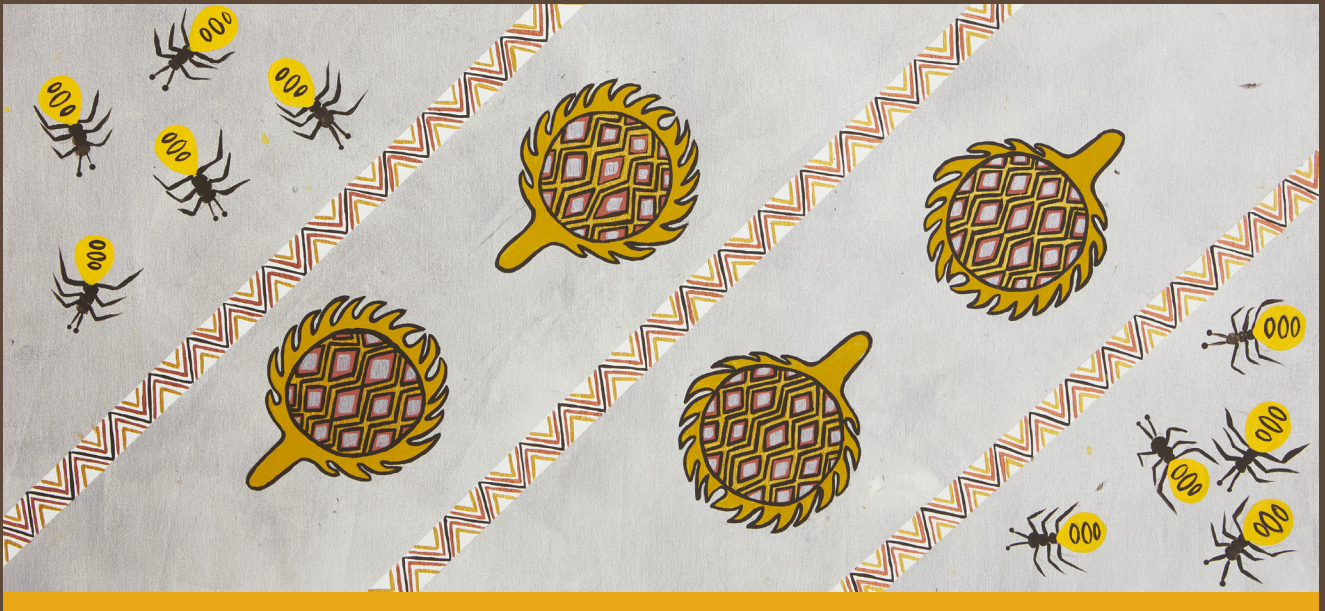
Reconciliation Action Plan

Tenants Victoria is committed to reconciliation and deepening our understanding of the impact of colonisation, inequality and systemic injustice on First Nations renters.

We completed our first Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) and are developing our next RAP, Innovate.

In our Reflect RAP, we focused on creating the foundations for reconciliation, including cultural awareness and improving our policies. In our Innovate RAP, we hope to deepen our learning and continue to work in partnership with First Nations organisations to improve renting experiences for First Nations renters.

We thank Alan Brown, Ambassador for the Victorian Aboriginal Health Service (VAHS), for his insights and support in our working group and wish him all the best with his other commitments as he steps down.



Story: This echidna is hunting for his dinner along the river.

Rokett (Yorta Yorta/Gunaikurnai), 'Echidnas and Ants', acrylic on canvas.

This artwork was created through The Torch, a not-for-profit organisation that provides art, cultural and arts industry support to First Nations people currently in, or recently released, from Victorian prisons.

Snapshot of our impact

Supporting renters



By providing accessible online information

ACROSS OUR WEBSITE

987,000
webpage views

614,000
website sessions

Most popular topics:

- 1 Ending or breaking your lease
- 2 Repairs and maintenance
- 3 Notices to vacate and eviction

ON OUR SOCIALS

469,713
views across
our channels



176,171
visitors to
our socials

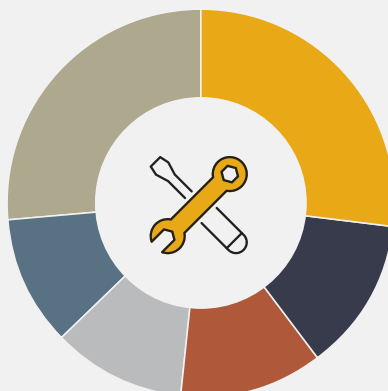
Through direct support

INFORMATION SERVICES



7530

renters accessed
help and information
through our phone and
web chat service



Top issues renters contacted us about:

- Repairs: 27%
- Notice to vacate: 12.8%
- Lease-breaking: 12.1%
- Compensation claim by renter: 10.9%
- Bonds: 10.9%
- Other 26.3%

SUPPORTING MULTICULTURAL RENTERS



4 large multicultural rental rights forums

15 small group discussions

500+

renters and community workers attended our forums and small group discussions

LEGAL SERVICE



1074

renters received legal advice, assistance and representation



We represented **89** renters at Rental Dispute Resolution Victoria (RDRV) and Victorian Civil & Administrative Tribunal (VCAT)

FINANCIAL COUNSELLING

491

renters experiencing or at risk of financial difficulty were provided advice, advocacy and support



SOCIAL WORK

151

renters were supported by our social workers



Our social workers helped renters understand their options, identified which services could help, and worked with these services to support them.

ROOMING HOUSE OUTREACH



60

rooming house residents were supported over the year – sharing information about their rights, facilitating access to relevant support services and addressing any concerns



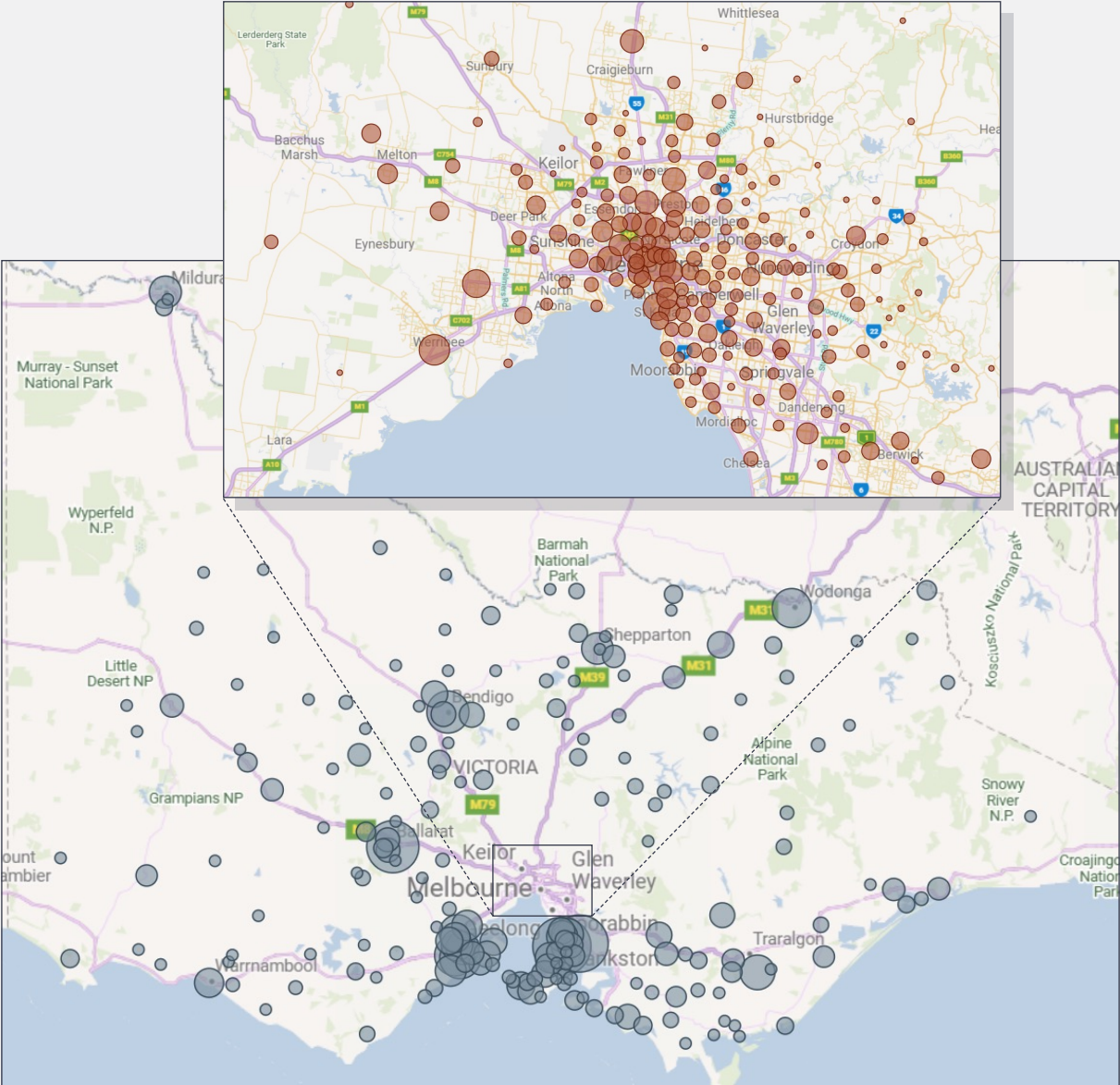
REPAIRS, COMPENSATION AND BONDS ADVICE



1192

renters learnt about their rights under the law and options they can take

OUR SERVICE REACH



Sector support and capability



Sector training



19

training and information sessions were delivered to strengthen the knowledge and skills of workers supporting renters in Victoria



Supporting community leaders and grassroots organisations



We engaged with **94** organisations to support multicultural renters with understanding their rights
We delivered **4** large multicultural rental rights forums
We ran **16** small group discussions



Advocating for renters and a fairer housing system



14

We wrote submissions to Government on issues affecting renters

13

We participated and advocated for renters' rights in 13 Government and sector working groups

We contributed to 5 positive wins for renters:



- 1** Stronger, clearer protections against excessive rent increases and extended notice periods for rent increases
- 2** No-fault evictions at the end of fixed-term leases and rental bidding are now banned
- 3** From 1 March 2027, rental properties with new leases must have an efficient electric cooling system in the main living area
- 4** New laws require evidence from landlords to claim money from a bond
- 5** Every landlord and real estate agent must use the same rental application form – renters can no longer be asked if they have children, pets or what sort of car they drive

How we helped renters

When Victoria's 2 million renters need support, they turn to Tenants Victoria. In March 2021, the Government introduced more than 130 reforms to Victoria's rental laws that made Victoria a leading jurisdiction in National Cabinet's 'A Better Deal for Renters'. Five years on, our services continue to support renters to understand and assert their rights.



While demand continues to exceed capacity, we remain focused on helping as many renters as possible to understand their rights, resolve disputes and access support. We do this through a range of services, including information and legal services, financial counselling, social work support, rooming house outreach and community education.

Direct support for renters

Our Rental Rights Officers, lawyers, financial counsellors, social workers and rooming house outreach workers, supported by secondee lawyers, law students and volunteers, provide multidisciplinary support to renters experiencing housing issues.

Depending on their needs, we provide renters with information and referrals, legal services,

financial counselling and social work support. This includes representing renters at RDRV and VCAT and assisting people to find and secure alternative housing when their current rental property is no longer sustainable.

To help meet growing demand, we work with universities and partner law firms to expand our service capacity. Through our Volunteer Clinic, law students assist renters with repair issues and applications to Rental Dispute Resolution Victoria (RDRV) under our supervision. During the past year, more than 30 students from Monash, La Trobe and the University of Melbourne participated in the clinic. Over the past year we have also been supported by 5 secondee lawyers from 4 partner firms. These roles strengthen our ability to deliver services and reach more Victorian renters.

Helping renters understand their rights

Clear, accessible information is a critical part of helping renters resolve issues and exercise their rights. With demand for legal and support services continuing to exceed capacity, self-help information plays an increasingly important role in ensuring renters can access support when they need it.

For many Victorians, our website is the first place they turn for help. It provides free, easy-to-understand information about rental rights and responsibilities, practical guidance on resolving common issues and pathways to further support.

We also developed resources to meet the growing need for advice for renters after disasters. During the year, we launched our new 'disasters' webpage, which offers information, videos and factsheets for renters affected by bushfires and other disasters and the community workers supporting them. We also produced our Legal Tips for Renters Affected by Disasters video series in Arabic, Chinese, Dari, Hindi and Punjabi, helping ensure critical information can be understood by more renters.

Through our website, social media channels and newsletters, we continue to provide clear legal information that helps renters understand and assert their rights.



Improving access through digital initiatives

During 2024-25, we launched our live web chat service. Our new web chat functionality means that Victorian renters can communicate directly with our Rental Rights Officer team through our website. This has expanded the number of renters we are able to reach, and has strengthened our ability to respond to changing client expectations, with many renters preferring to access services online rather than by phone.

Supporting multicultural renters

Newly arrived migrants are more likely to rent and may be unfamiliar with Victoria's rental laws and support systems. Our Multicultural Community Engagement team works with community organisations and leaders to ensure multicultural renters can access trusted, culturally responsive information and support.

During 2025-26, we delivered 4 large multicultural rental rights forums, 15 small group discussions and community engagement activities across Victoria. This included collaborations with Spectrum, Migrant Information Centre Box Hill, Foundation House, Wyndham Community and Education Centre, Chisholm Institute Dandenong, TAFE Moorabbin and Chadstone.

Clear, accessible information is a critical part of helping renters resolve issues and exercise their rights.

Online support



1958

conversations
with renters
through new
web chat



64

new web pages

Over two-thirds of
respondents to our website
survey found the content on
our website helpful.

13,000

downloads and
views for our
factsheets, videos
and template letters



387

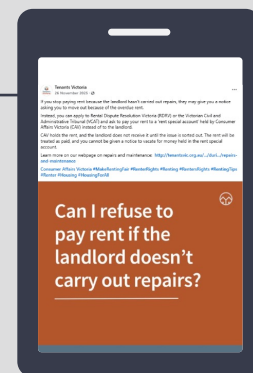
posts across our
Facebook, Instagram
and LinkedIn channels



We created videos for renters
in Arabic, Chinese, Dari, Hindi,
Karen and Punjabi

16,000

people saw our top post –
*Paying rent when repairs
are not completed*



Supporting multicultural renters



300+

people attended our
multicultural rental
rights forums

215+

people attended our
multicultural rental
rights small group
discussions

Common question themes:

- Renters' rights
- Rent increases and rent arrears
- Repairs
- Getting the bond back

Direct support



Number of services delivered:

12,810

8.3% 
increase compared
with FY 24-25

We helped renters aged

19 to over **85**

CALLS AND WEB CHATS WITH RENTERS



7530

renters helped

14.8% 
increase compared
with FY 24-25

9440

web chats and calls

19.9% 
increase compared
with FY 24-25



Due to demand,
we were only
able to answer
around **30%**
of renters who
contacted us



More than half of
renters (**56%**)
took steps to
resolve their
renting problem
after calling us



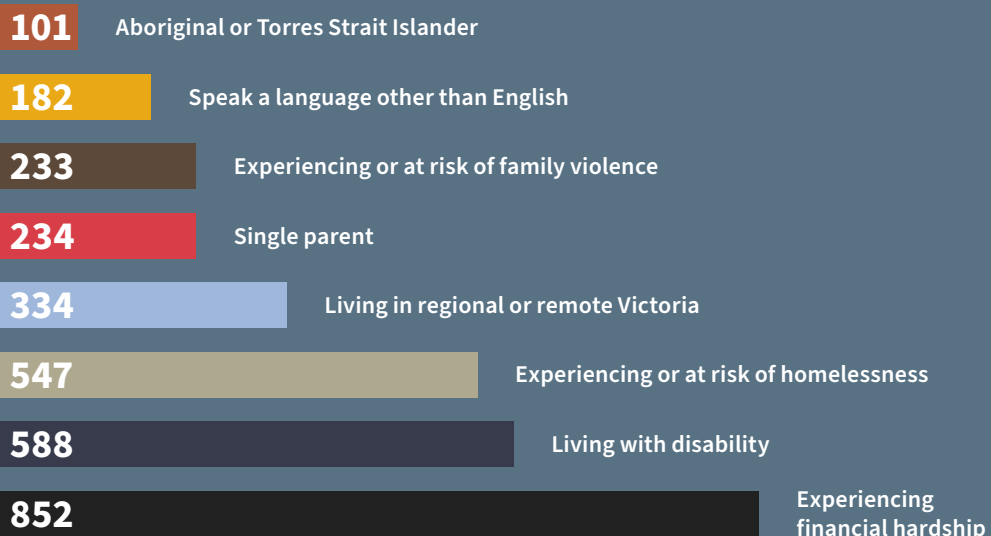
69%

of renters who used our phone or web chat service were generally satisfied

RENTERS SUPPORTED THROUGH OUR LEGAL, FINANCIAL COUNSELLING, SOCIAL WORK OR OUTREACH SERVICES



Renters



Developing accessible, meaningful and sustainable ways to listen to service and system feedback

We are conducting research to understand the impact of our work with renters by developing more accessible, meaningful and sustainable ways to collect service and system feedback. We want renters' voices to play a more significant role in our everyday work, and this project will help us listen more deeply and better respond to their needs.

We identified the need for this project through gaps in our previous approaches to feedback and because of our commitment to continuously improving how we understand and apply feedback from renters about our services. Some of the gaps included lower participation from key renter groups in our biannual survey and a reliance on surveys as the main method to capture feedback.

To address this gap, we are taking an evidenced-based approach. During the scoping phase, we spoke directly with renters from groups that had lower survey participation to better understand their preferences and motivations for providing feedback. We also interviewed service workers from across the free legal assistance sector to identify effective approaches and understand common challenges.

We are now designing 5 feedback prototypes, which will be tested over a 6-month pilot period. We are excited to have the opportunity to gather, reflect on, and act on more insights from renters who access our information, legal, financial counselling, and social work services.

This project is funded through a Victoria Law Foundation 2025-26 Major Grant.

During the scoping phase, we spoke directly with renters from groups that had lower survey participation to better understand their preferences and motivations for providing feedback.



Client story

When we launched our new strategic plan, we asked renter Macy Choudhury to share a reflection on why organisations like Tenants Victoria matter:

Housing is so much more than just a sheltering roof over one's head. Housing in every form is ultimately an individual's home, where they return to rest, recover and rejuvenate from the outside world. Yet for many renters, housing can also be a source of stress and instability.

In the current cost-of-living conditions, renters can face many challenges. Rising rents can place steep pressure on restrictive household budgets. Some renters may deal with maintenance issues that are ignored, face unexpected rent increases, disputes with their rental providers, or feel uncertain about their tenancy rights. For many, renting can be a stark reminder of the power imbalance between landlords and tenants. Landlords or rental providers may own the property, understand the system better, and have more financial resources available to them. A new renter, or a renter from marginalised communities may feel unsure about what their rental rights are or what protections they have.

This is where organisations like Tenants Victoria become imperatively important.

One of the most valuable resources they provide to renters is information. They bestow their specialist legal knowledge about rental rights, responsibilities and entitlements. That knowledge is powerful stuff.

Many renters simply do not know what the law says about repairs, rent increases, bonds, privacy, or eviction processes. Without reliable information, renters can feel confused or vulnerable. Tenants Victoria makes seeking help less daunting, legal rules easier to understand and gives renters the knowledge they need to make informed decisions.

But Tenants Victoria's role goes beyond just providing information. They also provide support. From my personal experience of being a single parent renter dealing with serious mould in my rental property, that was putting me in an unsafe environment and heightening my health risks as a disabled woman. The team at Tenants Victoria empowered me with information, tools for self-advocacy and support to create a formidable force in championing for my rights.

For many people in a similar situation as mine, it can be exceptionally overwhelming. Having access to free advice and guidance can make a huge difference. Sometimes all people need is someone to explain their options and help them understand what steps they can take next.

Tenants Victoria also plays an important role in fairness and accountability. Laws and policies only work if people can access them and use them effectively. Policies and legislations mean very little to the common person if they do not know it exists and can't afford legal advice to explain how those policies apply to them. Tenants Victoria helps ensure that renters are not left to navigate difficult situations alone and make the system more balanced.

Tenants Victoria supports people who are most vulnerable. Low-income households, students, migrants, older people, and people facing difficult life circumstances with few resources at their disposal. Without support services like Tenants Victoria, many could be at greater risk of housing insecurity or even homelessness. Providing assistance at the right time can prevent problems from becoming much larger crises.

Building capability and supporting the sector

Tenants Victoria continues to play a critical role in strengthening the capability of the renter support sector across Victoria. By sharing our expertise in residential tenancy law, providing practical skills development and supporting frontline workers with advice, we help ensure more renters can access informed, effective assistance when they experience housing issues.

During 2025-26, we delivered 19 training sessions to professionals working across the tenancy, legal, housing, community services and financial counselling sectors. Our residential tenancies law and skills training program continued to build knowledge, confidence and capability among both new and experienced practitioners.

Participant feedback demonstrated the value of this work:

- Almost 80% of attendees rated our legislative update training as very successful in improving knowledge and confidence relevant to their day-to-day work
- 100% rated our case law update sessions as very successful in strengthening their understanding and practical application of tenancy law

100% rated our case law update sessions as very successful in strengthening their understanding and practical application of tenancy law.



As climate-related housing challenges increasingly affect renters, we also expanded our training program with 3 new specialist modules: Common Disaster Renting Issues, Repairs and Compensation in Disasters, and Terminations and Evictions in Disasters.

Beyond training, we worked with the sector to develop and build our Renter Referral Tool, which will be piloted over the next 12 months. Designed through research, sector consultation and service design, the tool helps community workers connect renters with the most appropriate service faster, reducing the need for renters to navigate multiple organisations before receiving assistance.

We also supported the introduction of Rental Dispute Resolution Victoria (RDRV), a significant change to Victoria's dispute process. To help frontline services understand and navigate the new model, we hosted an online information session featuring RDRV representatives, Kylea Campana and Warwick Mitchell. Around 100 participants from community organisations, education providers

and community legal centres attended, gaining practical insights into the new, faster pathway for resolving common rental disputes, including bond claims, repairs, excessive rent increases and compensation matters.

Alongside these initiatives, we continued to provide one-on-one support to workers assisting renters across Victoria. Through our Community Worker Tenancy Service, our lawyers offer in-depth consultations and legal advice to community workers across Victoria, helping them resolve complex tenancy matters and better support the renters they work with.

By building the knowledge, confidence and capability of frontline workers, we extend our impact beyond the renters we directly assist. Through training, secondary consultations, sector collaboration and leadership, we continue to strengthen Victoria's renter support sector and help more renters access safe, secure and affordable housing.

Community worker tenancy service



640

services delivered
to **300+**
organisations

Education and training for the sector

19

sessions

500+

sector workers
attended

3

new
e-learns

Why outreach matters

Our Rooming House Outreach program visits rooming houses across Melbourne, providing residents with information about their rights, answering questions and connecting them with relevant support services.

During 2025-26, the program supported 60 rooming house residents, with several securing long-term, affordable housing outcomes.

Over the year, the program worked across 13 local government areas (LGAs) in the North West Melbourne metro area, identifying and visiting over 300 rooming houses. Through this outreach, we built strong partnerships with community health and housing organisations, including cohealth, IPC Health, Bolton Clarke, Wintringham, Homefront, Women's Housing, VincentCare and Greenlight. We also referred concerns about rooming house conditions and compliance to local council regulatory authorities and Consumer Affairs Victoria, whose engagement has been proactive and constructive.

We also worked closely with the Australia Bureau of Statistics (ABS) in preparation for the Census, helping ensure rooming house residents were included and supported to participate. Our outreach activities also identified the most vulnerable rooming house residents living in rooming house rooms purchased by homeless access points. These rooming houses have been prioritised for ongoing engagement and support.

A key aspect of the program is connecting residents with Tenants Victoria's broader services, including financial counselling and legal assistance. Many residents face complex tenancy, financial and housing issues that can significantly affect their wellbeing. By providing coordinated support across our services, we help residents address these challenges, better understand their rights and work towards more secure housing outcomes.

Through our Rooming House Outreach Program, we supported one resident to secure safe and stable accommodation and has since moved into a unit of their own. The resident had been living in a rooming house operated by a community housing provider and was experiencing ongoing issues with rent and service fee calculations. A financial counsellor worked closely with the resident to review rental payments and fees, identifying a number of discrepancies. The financial counsellor then referred the matter to our legal team, who supported the resident to lodge a formal complaint. The resident greatly valued the coordinated support, care and advocacy provided across our services.

A key aspect of the program is connecting residents with Tenants Victoria's broader services, including financial counselling and legal assistance.

How we advocated for a fairer housing system

Tenants Victoria's policy and advocacy work aims to improve renting in Victoria by strengthening renter protections, increasing access to housing that people can afford and ensuring renters' experiences inform government policy and decision-making.



Drawing on insights from our direct work with renters, we identify systemic issues and advocate for change through policy submissions, research, government engagement, sector partnerships and public campaigns.

During 2025-26, we made 14 submissions, participated in 13 government and sector working groups, including chairing the Tenancy Coordination Group and the Tenants Working Group, and launched a high profile public Victorian Budget platform.

Strategic advocacy priorities

In 2025-26, we had 4 strategic advocacy priorities:

1. Regulation of rent increases
2. The provision of greater social and legal supports to renters
3. Helping renters and landlords better understand their rights and responsibilities
4. Increasing renters' ability and willingness to enforce their rights

Our advocacy contributed to several important outcomes during the year. Renters gained stronger protections against excessive rent increases. For the first time, Consumer Affairs Victoria must consider the Consumer Price Index (CPI), alongside other factors, when determining whether a rent increase is excessive.

The Victorian Government also launched the Victorian Renter Rights Program, resulting in a substantial increase in ongoing funding for renter assistance services and almost doubling annual baseline funding for renter support.

Through print, radio, television and online media, we amplified renters' experiences and helped bring information on renting into the public domain. Our media engagement highlighted new protections for renters that came in through the year, as well as ways in which the renting experience pointed to the need for further changes. High-reach news outlets published our content pieces and interviews, including the Herald Sun, news.com.au, 7NEWS, ABC radio and Nine News.

While the Victorian Government's new rental dispute mediation body, Rental Dispute Resolution Victoria (RDRV) launched in June 2025, Tenants Victoria was very active in 2025-26 in monitoring how implementation was working for renters, and working alongside the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT) on further improvements to this important new mechanism for renters to navigate disputes. While progress on improving RDRV continues, early indications are that renters are initiating matters at a greater rate than was expected.

Bringing renters' voices to the front

The experiences of renters are at the centre of our advocacy.

Our frontline staff, lawyers, financial counsellors and social workers provide valuable insight into the challenges renters face and where laws, policies and systems can be improved. We use this evidence to ensure renters' voices are heard by decision-makers.

For example, when the Victorian Government established an Expert Panel to review the *Owners Corporations Act 2006* (Vic), we gathered evidence from renters and frontline staff about the challenges faced by renters living in apartment buildings. Renters reported difficulties obtaining information from owners corporations, even when issues directly affected their homes. In response, we recommended stronger rights for renters to communicate directly with owners corporations and receive updates about repairs and other matters affecting their living conditions.

Our frontline staff, lawyers, financial counsellors and social workers provide valuable insight into the challenges renters face and where laws, policies and systems can be improved.

Working to expose issues for renters

We collaborated with the Consumer Policy Research Centre (CPRC) and the University of Melbourne on research to better understand rental increases and racism in Victoria.

Rent increases

We know from our work that renters face unpredictable and often high rent increases. This makes it hard for renters to plan into the future.

The research, funded by Consumer Affairs Victoria, included a literature review, interviews with rental providers and real estate agents and a Mystery Shop where researchers asked real estate agents to describe the rent increase process to prospective rental providers.

The report, released by CPRC in September 2025, explored:

- How rental providers make rent-setting decisions
- The inconsistent approaches and roles of real estate agents
- How media coverage can influence the rental crisis

It found 80% of rental providers increased the rent in the last two years by an average of 17% and that 2 out of 3 rental providers raise rents to cover their costs, while only 2 out of 5 increase rents in line with market rates. Overall, the report found inconsistency in rent setting methodology among rental providers and their real estate agents.

Rental racism

This research conducted by researchers at the University of Melbourne in partnership with Tenants Victoria exposed the reality of racial discrimination in Victoria's rental market, with 69% of those surveyed reporting direct experiences of racism when trying to secure housing.

The research found that most discrimination came from estate agents and property managers (60% in this sample), with participants reporting being rejected based solely on their names and selectively denied entry during an inspection.

The report released in March 2026 found:

- **82%** identify discrimination as a significant problem in rental housing
- **61%** were denied housing due to racial background
- **60%** of discrimination was perpetrated by agents and/or property managers
- **67%** report that the racism affected their health and wellbeing
- **53%** were required to meet higher standards when applying for a rental

The research identified multicultural housing workers as crucial to breaking down barriers. These workers bring lived experience, cultural knowledge, and trusted community connections that can bridge the gap between renters from multicultural backgrounds and the housing system.

Working across the sector

Last year, we brought together key stakeholders from across the rental sector to explore how rent regulation operates in other jurisdictions and consider how a Rent Increase Fairness Formula could work in Victoria.

The roundtable included real estate representatives, the Real Estate Institute of Victoria (REIV), the Residential Tenancies Commissioner, economists, renter advocates and consumer groups. It highlighted the importance of bringing diverse perspectives together to develop practical, evidence-based reforms that improve outcomes for renters.

Through advocacy, policy leadership and collaboration, we continue to champion reforms that make renting fairer and help more Victorians access safe, secure and affordable housing.

Influencing policy and legislative reform



14 responses to Government consultations, including:

- Education and fees for property industry professionals
- Renewable and affordable energy for apartments
- A review of the *Owners Corporations Act 2006* (Vic)
- Intergenerational Housing Inequity
- Implementation of the Social Housing Regulation Review
- Reforms to the *Residential Tenancies Act 1997* (Vic) and regulations
- Implementation of the Portable Rental Bond Scheme (PBRs)

Influencing policy and legislative reform



A number of important rental reforms came into effect during the year, strengthening protections for Victorian renters.

These reforms included:

- Prohibiting unsolicited offers of higher rent or rent in advance
- Strengthening excessive rent increase reviews, including consideration of Consumer Price Index (CPI)
- Extending notice periods for rent increases and certain notices to vacate to 90 days
- Introducing a standard rental application form that limits inappropriate questions and prevents discrimination based on children or pets
- Strengthening protections for renters' personal information
- Requiring rental properties to meet minimum standards before being advertised
- Improving smoke alarm safety requirements
- Banning 'no reason' evictions
- Banning additional fees for paying rent
- Banning rental application background-check fees
- Launching of the Portable Rental Bond Scheme (PRBS)

Raising the profile of issues facing renters



320

stories and interviews published across news outlets, such as the Herald Sun, news.com.au, 7NEWS, ABC radio and Nine News



People and corporate services

Our people are central to Tenants Victoria. We are committed to building a capable, engaged, and inclusive workforce by investing in employee development, wellbeing, workplace culture, and organisational capability. By creating an environment where people can thrive, collaborate and grow, we strengthen our impact and advance our mission of supporting Victorian renters.

Building leadership capability

Developing leadership capability remained a key priority throughout the year. Through coaching, facilitated workshops, and increased opportunities for delegation and decision-making, employees were supported to strengthen their skills, build confidence and develop their leadership capability. These initiatives helped foster a culture of learning, accountability, and collaboration, while supporting the achievement of our strategic priorities.

Creating a modern workplace

A significant milestone during the year was the successful relocation to our new office in February. The new modern workspace provides improved facilities, upgraded technology, dedicated collaboration areas and enhanced hybrid meeting capabilities. Designed to support flexibility, connection and teamwork, the office reflects the evolving ways we work and collaborate, while

providing an environment that better supports our employees and the delivery of our services.

Inclusive and supportive workplace

We continued to strengthen our commitment to creating an inclusive, supportive, and rewarding workplace.

Key achievements included:

- Finalising a new Multi-Enterprise Agreement, delivering improved pay and conditions for employees
- Enhancing workplace policies and practices to further support inclusion, wellbeing and employee experience
- Continuing investment in learning and professional development opportunities across the organisation



Lawyers, pro bono and secondees

Lawyer secondments and pro bono support from commercial law firms continue to make a valued contribution to Tenants Victoria. The expertise, enthusiasm, and fresh perspectives these lawyers bring strengthen our capacity to assist more renters, advance strategic advocacy, and pursue meaningful law reform.

Their contribution enhances the quality and impact of our services while enriching our team with new skills and insights. We are deeply grateful to our secondee and pro bono lawyers and the firms that support them for their partnership, commitment and shared dedication to housing justice.

Volunteers

Tenants Victoria is proud to support aspiring legal professionals through our paralegal student placement program. Placements provide students with valuable practical experience, while offering the benefit of working alongside experienced staff in a supportive and collaborative environment. Through mentoring, learning and hands-on involvement in our work, students build skills, confidence and professional capability that will support them throughout their careers. We value their contribution and are pleased to help develop future professionals who share our commitment to making a positive difference in the community.

Listening and feedback

Employee voice remained an important focus throughout the year. Findings from the 2025 Employee Engagement Survey reinforced the strong foundations of Tenants Victoria's culture, with employees reporting high levels of pride, role clarity and confidence in their managers.

Survey results showed that:

- **81%** of employees are proud to work at Tenants Victoria.
- **84%** have confidence in their direct manager.
- **81%** understand what is expected of them in their role.
- **74%** have access to learning and development opportunities.

The survey also identified opportunities to strengthen communication and organisational alignment. These insights have informed our ongoing People and Culture initiatives and have been incorporated into the implementation of the 2026-2031 Strategic Plan.

Bessie Tripatzis

PEOPLE AND CULTURE MANAGER

We are deeply grateful to our secondee and pro bono lawyers and the firms that support them for their partnership, commitment and shared dedication to housing justice.

Financial report

Tenants Victoria recorded a surplus of \$253,326 in 2025–26 and finished the year with \$3.06 million in cash and short-term deposits. The result reflects continued investment in staffing, funded projects, technology and organisational capability while maintaining a strong financial position.

Total revenue increased to \$7.78 million, compared with \$6.94 million in the previous year (restated). Funding from Consumer Affairs Victoria, Homes Victoria, Victoria Legal Aid and the Financial Counselling Foundation continued to provide the foundation for the organisation's work, alongside support from a range of other funding partners.

The lower surplus compared with the previous year's result of \$795,307 reflects increased expenditure on staffing, funded projects, technology and organisational capability during the year.

At 30 June 2026, cash and short-term deposits totalled \$3.06 million, providing a strong foundation to support operational requirements and future priorities. Net assets increased from \$2.06 million to \$2.32 million during the year.

Comparative figures for 2024–25 have been restated following a correction to the accounting treatment of consortium funding. The adjustment increased both revenue and project expenditure by \$585,000, with no impact on the previously reported surplus or cash position.

Tenants Victoria enters 2026–27 with strong liquidity, increased net assets and continued support from funding partners. This stability enables the organisation to continue providing services, education, advocacy and support for Victorian renters.

Brendan Lonergan, CPA
FINANCE MANAGER

Financial statements

Statement of Profit or Loss and Other Comprehensive Income

for the year ended 30 June 2026

	2026 \$	Restated* 2025 \$
Revenue from continuing activities	7,778,893	6,936,069
Employee benefit expenses	(5,187,583)	(4,262,871)
Project expenses	(1,186,483)	(1,046,816)
Information and communication technology expenses	(330,076)	(226,301)
Organisational improvement and consultancy expenses	(223,175)	(71,687)
Administration expenses	(252,284)	(264,490)
Occupancy expenses	(41,873)	(27,972)
Membership and affiliation expenses	(14,778)	(12,742)
Legal fees	(9,363)	(1,664)
Depreciation and amortisation expenses	(237,901)	(206,276)
Interest expenses	(42,051)	(19,943)
Surplus/(Deficit) before income tax	253,326	795,307
Income tax expense	-	-
Net surplus/(deficit) for the year	253,326	795,307
Other comprehensive income		
Other comprehensive income for the year, net of tax	-	-
Total comprehensive profit/(loss) for the year	253,326	795,307

Statement of Financial Position

as at 30 June 2026

	2026 \$	2025 \$
Current assets		
Cash and cash equivalents	1,777,637	1,854,690
Trade and other receivables	74,404	218,474
Financial assets	1,283,625	1,229,239
Other current assets	88,316	85,364
Total current assets	3,223,982	3,387,767
Non-current assets		
Trade and other receivables	180,985	210,420
Plant and equipment	93,688	85,034
Right of use assets	1,216,697	172,243
Total non-current assets	1,491,370	467,697
Total assets	4,715,352	3,855,464
Current liabilities		
Trade and other payables	452,957	295,679
Tax liabilities	31,318	92,449
Provisions - employee entitlements	320,089	255,900
Lease liabilities	227,578	256,637
Other current liabilities	178,000	775,000
Total current liabilities	1,209,942	1,675,665
Non-current liabilities		
Provisions - employee entitlements	102,535	117,729
Lease liabilities	1,087,479	-
Total non-current liabilities	1,190,014	117,729
Total liabilities	2,399,956	1,793,394
Net assets	2,315,396	2,062,070
Equity		
Retained surplus	2,315,396	2,062,070
Total equity	2,315,396	2,062,070

Statement of Changes in Equity

for the year ended 30 June 2026

	Retained Surplus \$	Total \$
Balance as at 1 July 2024	1,266,763	1,266,763
Comprehensive Income		
Surplus for the year	795,307	795,307
Other comprehensive income	-	-
Total comprehensive profit	795,307	795,307
Balance as at 30 June 2025	2,062,070	2,062,070
Balance as at 1 July 2025	2,062,070	2,062,070
Comprehensive Income		
Surplus for the year	253,326	253,326
Other comprehensive income	-	-
Total comprehensive profit	253,326	253,326
Balance as at 30 June 2026	2,315,396	2,315,396

Statement of Cash Flows

for the year ended 30 June 2026

	2026 \$	Restated* 2025 \$
Cash flow from operating activities		
Receipts from government and other sources	7,895,451	7,314,879
Payments to suppliers and employees	(7,715,799)	(6,359,857)
Interest received	87,743	86,855
Interest paid	(42,051)	(19,943)
Net cash provided by operating activities	225,344	1,021,934
Cash flow from investing activities		
Payments for plant and equipment	(73,898)	(68,161)
Payments for term deposits	(65,835)	(634,162)
Net cash used in investing activities	(139,733)	(702,323)
Cash flow from financing activities		
Repayments of lease liabilities	(162,664)	(260,031)
Net cash used in financing activities	(162,664)	(260,031)
Net increase/(decrease) in cash held	(77,053)	59,580
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of financial year	1,854,690	1,795,110
Cash and cash equivalents at end of financial year	1,777,637	1,854,690

Our people

Senior Leadership Team



Jennifer Beveridge
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER



Cameron Bloye
DIRECTOR OF CLIENT
SERVICES / DEPUTY CHIEF
EXECUTIVE OFFICER



Carman Parsons
DIRECTOR OF IMPACT
AND INNOVATION



Damien Patterson
DIRECTOR OF POLICY, ADVOCACY
AND ENGAGEMENT



Bessie Tripatzis
PEOPLE AND CULTURE
MANAGER



Brendan Lonergan
FINANCE MANAGER

Board



Serge Sardo

CHAIR

Appointed: 10 December 2024

Special responsibilities: Chair from 25 March 2025, Member of the People and Governance Committee



Jolene George

Appointed: 1 December 2023

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



Jiayue Li

Appointed: 19 August 2019

Special responsibilities: Chair of the Audit, Finance and Risk Committee (retired 1 January 2025)



Clinton Licht

Appointed: 1 December 2021

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



Eila Pourasgheri

Appointed: 1 December 2023

Special responsibilities: Chair of People and Governance Committee



Shane (Harry) Smith

Appointed: 1 December 2023

Special responsibilities: Member of People and Governance Committee



Allison Wetzels

Appointed: 1 September 2025

Special responsibilities: Member of Audit, Finance & Risk Committee



Danielle Walt

Appointed: 20 April 2026

Special responsibilities: Member of People and Governance Committee



Andrew Ogbourne

Appointed: 5 March 2018

Special responsibilities: Deputy Chair Board, Chair of the People and Governance Committee

Retired 31 December 2025

Company secretary

Bettina Wachsmuth

Appointed: 24 June 2024

Special responsibilities: Company Secretary, Member of the Audit, Finance & Risk Committee (retired 25 August 2025), Member of People and Governance Committee

Board observer

Naomi Gibney

Appointed: 1 September 2025

Patron

Professor the Honourable Kevin Bell AO KC



Partners

Community

Aboriginal Housing Victoria
Community Housing Industry Association Victoria
Consumer Policy Research Centre
Council to Homeless Persons
Everybody's Home
Financial Counselling Foundation
Housing for the Aged Action Group (HAAG)
National Association of Renters' Organisations (NARO)
National Shelter
Safe and Equal
Victorian Council of Social Service
Victorian Public Tenants Association

Community Legal Centres

ARC Justice
Barwon Community Legal Service
Eastern Community Legal Centre
Federation of Community Legal Centres
Inner Melbourne Community Legal
Justice Connect
Peninsula Community Legal Centre
Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service
West Heidelberg Community Legal
Westjustice
Womens' Legal Service Victoria

Legal

Matthew Albert (pro bono support)
Allens (pro bono support)
Gemma Cafarella (pro bono support)
HWL Ebsworth (pro bono support)
Mallesons (pro bono support)
Moray & Agnew (pro bono support)
Law Institute of Victoria
Maddocks (pro bono support)
Sparke Helmore Lawyers (pro bono support)
Rental Dispute Resolution Victoria (RDRV)
Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT)
Victoria Law Foundation
Victoria Legal Aid
Victorian Legal Services Board and Commissioner

Government

Commissioner for Residential Tenancies
Consumer Affairs Victoria
Department of Families, Fairness and Housing
Homes Victoria

Research

Consumer Policy Research Centre
Monash University
The University of Melbourne
The University of Sydney
RMIT University
University of NSW

Industry

Real Estate Institute of Victoria
Kolmeo
YIMBY
Assemble



Tenants Victoria

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Media culture

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Tenants Victoria

Ben Galpin Graphic Design