Marrickville Legal Centre
From the inner west, serving NSW

MLC NEWS
January Edition

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Marrickville Legal Centre has had an incredibly busy start to 2026, with the team answering more than 2,600 calls from the community since reopening our doors back in January.

In this month's edition of MLC News, we're announcing a new free legal advice clinic for renters in Burwood, telling the inspiring story of our Low Cost Legal Service client Phoebe, promoting the perks of MLC membership, and answering questions about new strata payment plan laws.

Free multilingual legal advice clinic for renters in Burwood

Marrickville Legal Centre is proud to announce that we're launching a brand-new free legal advice clinic!

This clinic has been designed with renters in Burwood who speak Mandarin in mind. Advice sessions at this clinic are supported with Mandarin interpreter services and printed materials in English and Simplified Chinese.

No bookings are required. The advice clinic details are as follows:

- 9:30am – 12pm | Every 3rd Tuesday of each month
- (24 Feb*, 17 Mar, 21 Apr, 19 May, 16 Jun, 21 Jul)
- Burwood Library | Community Lab 2
- 2 Conder Street, Burwood (entry via Unity Pl)

For further details, please contact Burwood Library at (02) 9911 9999.

** Please note that the February clinic has been rescheduled to 24 February in consideration of the Lunar New Year occurring in the preceding week.*

Low Cost Legal Service: Phoebe's story

Phoebe* never imagined she'd be starting again after more than a decade with her partner. The end of their relationship left her in a tough spot, feeling the full force of financial insecurity. While her ex enjoyed the comfort of a steady executive role, Phoebe was self-employed, pouring most of her earnings back into her small business.

Together, Phoebe and her former partner had purchased their home and secured the mortgage for her shop location with the assistance of a small inheritance. But when their relationship ended and she was told to move out, a wave of anxiety hit.

She dreaded facing the cut-throat rental market and worried constantly about losing her shop – her livelihood. "If I lose this, this is my livelihood and I would have to start again," she confided.

On the advice of her neighbour, Phoebe met with a private lawyer. However, the costs proved overwhelming, and she sensed the lawyer didn't quite grasp what it was like to be in real financial strife.

Feeling desperate, Phoebe called Marrickville Legal Centre for some free advice. Although the solicitor on the phone proved helpful, the advice Phoebe received was general, and she stated on the call that she needed something more tailored to her situation.

That's when everything changed.

The solicitor on the phone mentioned that Marrickville Legal Centre was beginning a pilot for the Low Cost Legal Service (LCLS), a deeply-discounted fixed-fee service designed for those who cannot afford a private lawyer but are ineligible for free services or require more in-depth assistance. Phoebe

enthusiastically agreed to take part in the pilot and was put in touch with LCLS solicitor Michelle.

From the get-go, Michelle understood Phoebe's money worries. She reassured her, saying: "Don't stress, we're not going to let you go broke."

This admission was a huge relief for Phoebe, who suddenly felt genuinely cared for and no longer at risk of being taken advantage of. With Michelle and the LCLS team, Phoebe found she could relax and be herself during such a stressful time – she could even have a laugh.

The financial gap between her and her former partner meant a massive lifestyle shake-up, but with the right support, things started to feel manageable. She stated: "Not only was everyone at MLC incredibly kind and down-to-earth, but they were also intelligent and switched on."

"I felt like I was back in control with MLC on my side."

Michelle and the LCLS team guided Phoebe and her former partner through the process of entering into a Binding Financial Agreement, the best-case outcome for both parties.

Thanks to the empathy and in-depth assistance she received from Marrickville Legal Centre's Low Cost Legal Service, Phoebe finally feels like her life is back on track. Phoebe hopes to give back to Marrickville Legal Centre when she is in a better financial spot.

**name has been changed to protect the privacy of the individual.*

Find out more about LCLS

Become an MLC Member and help shape our impact!

Joining Marrickville Legal Centre as a member not only grants you access to exclusive perks but also empowers you to shape the impact our organisation has within the community:

- Members have the opportunity to **vote at general meetings**, allowing you to directly influence decisions and policies that affect the direction and initiatives of Marrickville Legal Centre.
- Members **gain access to exclusive MLC events**, such as seminars, workshops, and networking opportunities.
- Members r**eceive a copy of our Annual Report**, offering transparency into our achievements and financial performance throughout the year.
- Members have the privilege to **review and provide input on the MLC Constitution**, the foundational document that outlines our mission, values, and governance structure.

Become an MLC Member today

Come say hi to MLC at Fair Day!

We are proud to announce that Marrickville Legal Centre will be hosting a stall at the 2026 Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras Fair Day!

MLC will be present at one of Mardi Gras' most popular events to provide general information on our services to the wider LGBTQIA+ community.

Fair Day will be held on **Sunday 15th February** at **Victoria Park in Camperdown** from **9am – 9pm** – we hope to see you there!

Strata changes: new laws on strata payment plans

As of 25th October last year, there are some new laws around asking for a payment plan as an owner in a strata scheme in New South Wales.

In the latest article on our website, our team answers some important questions regarding these laws: from when payment plans must be accepted to how debt recovery is changing.

Read more on our website

Thank you for all of your support so far! If you haven't yet, please make sure to follow us on Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, and TikTok to get more updates on the Centre and our services.

Warm regards,

The MLC team

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