

South Coast CLSD Program Meeting

19 November 2024 | 11am – 1pm | Online

DRAFT MINUTES

Present: Brooke Emery (CLSD Program Regional Coordinator), Winnecke Baker (Legal Aid NSW), Malindey Sorrel (The Family Place), Dannielle Falzon (Revenue NSW), Lyn Carriage (Legal Aid NSW), Yvonne De Borde (Macarthur Legal Centre), Gabby (The Family Place), Alexandra Rafail (Aboriginal Legal Service NSW/ACT), Sarah Dunn (St Vincent de Paul), Steve Robinson (Wellways), Andrea Angeles (NCOSS), Susan Cheetham (Salvation Army), Lucy Fielding (Legal Aid NSW), Melissa Coe (Legal Aid NSW), Sue Philipps (Legal Aid NSW), Stacey Thomson (Medicare Mental Health Centre Moruya), Kerry Wright (Legal Aid NSW), Louise Farroway (Illawarra Legal Centre), Jayne (The Family Place), Claire Brown (Illawarra Legal Centre), Maxine Pendergast (IRT Home Care), Tamara Chatfield (Aboriginal Affairs), Bella Worner-Butcher (Aboriginal Legal Service NSW/ACT), Simona Angeli (Verto) Daphne Parsons (TAFE, NSW), Tina McCarthy (Anglicare, Family Relationship Centre), Eliza Miller (Community Industry Group), Louisa Stewart (Shoal Coast Community Legal Centre)

Apologies: Sharlene Naismith (Legal Aid NSW), Yasmine Lewis (Legal Aid NSW, Community Legal Education), Kirsten Griffin (Legal Aid NSW, Senior Civil Law Solicitor), Talisha Godwin (Senior Client Service Officer, Housing Services Batemans Bay-Homes NSW) Melinda Luke (FRC Program Lead, Nowra Family Relationship Centre) Sharon Alles (Meridian ACT) Kaitlynd Gosling (Coordinator, Eurobodalla Homelessness Support Service, Anglicare NSW) Emily Klaus (Women Illawarra) Justine Conaty (Senior Solicitor (Women), Civil Law Aboriginal Legal Service, NSW/ACT) Andrew Banks (Associate, Hall and Wilcox Law) Melinda Luke (Anglicare, Family Relationship Centre)

Agenda item	Discussion	Action/Outcome
1. Opening and purpose	<p>Brooke acknowledged chairing the meeting from Yuin Country and welcomed everyone.</p> <p>Meeting Objective: To discuss and workshop current legal and related issues regarding tenancy. Several priorities for the CLSD Program were raised during a meeting of legal partners in quarter 2. Convening this meeting about tenancy was one and the remainder, listed at the end of the minutes, will be a focus in 2025.</p>	

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Email: brooke@familyplace.org.au
Webpage: [South Coast CLSD Program Partnership](#)

<p>2. Service Introductions</p>	<p><u>Legal Aid NSW</u> Lyn Carriage: Solicitor, Civil Law Service for Aboriginal Communities (02) 4228 8299 1800 019 998 lyn.carriage@legalaid.nsw.gov.au Sue Phillips: Aboriginal Field Officer, Family Law Service for Aboriginal Communities, focus on care and protection and family law matters. Melissa Coe: Aboriginal Field Officer, Nowra office. Supports people experiencing civil, family and criminal law matters. Monthly outreach to Moruya and travels to Bega and further south a few times/year. Kerry Wright: Civil Law Solicitor. Focus on working with specialist homelessness services in Eurobodalla and Bega Valley, working with clients who are homeless or at risk of homelessness, and helping people who are at risk of losing a tenancy. Can help clients with negative classifications on tenancy databases and asserting rights under the Residential Tenancies Act. Next year looking at having a regular outreach in Bega Valley with a family law solicitor too. Lucy Fielding: Civil Law Solicitor, focus on Nowra and north of Nowra.</p> <p><u>Shoalcoast Community Legal Centre,</u> Louisa Stewart: Principal Solicitor. Shoalcoast Community Legal Centre provides outreach in-person to Shoalhaven, Eurobodalla, Bega Valley, Snowy Monaro and Queanbeyan/Palerang LGAs.</p> <p><u>Macarthur Legal Centre,</u> Yvonne de Borde: Service Promotion Officer Western Region. Macarthur Legal Centre can provide legal advice to residents in Bimberi, Bogong Peaks, Wilder, Brindabella, Brungle, Brungle Creek, Cabramurra, Cooleman, Kiandra, Kosciuszko, Long Plain, Pilot Wilderness, Uriarra and Goulbourn Mulwaree LGA.</p> <p><u>Aboriginal Legal Service</u> Alexandra Rafail: Solicitor, Family Violence Prevention Unit Bella Worner-Butcher: Solicitor, Family Violence Prevention Unit Based in Nowra, this service helps Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who are at risk or who have experienced family and domestic violence or sexual assault.</p>	<p>Lyn Carriage (Civil Law Service for Aboriginal Communities) is working on far south coast outreach in 2025. Contact Lyn to if you would like to discuss coordinating outreach.</p>
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Bella.worner-butcher@alsnswact.org.au

Illawarra Legal Centre

Louise Farroway: Coordinator. Cover from Helensburgh roughly to Nowra. Have a financial Counsellor and Welfare Rights specialist Solicitor (social security law) who covers a bigger area.

Tenants Advice and Advocacy Program

The tenancy service helps tenants from Helensburgh right to the Victoria border. Provide advice to tenants and to homeowners in Land Lease communities. The team is small so mainly provide advocacy where it could save a tenancy; termination orders or where there are significant repair issues and people don't have capacity to go to the tribunal. Also do duty advocacy at Wollongong NCAT.

Claire Brown: Team Leader, Tenants Advice and Advocacy Program.

The Family Place

Malindey Sorrel: CEO

Gabby: Financial Counsellor, covering Bega and Eurobodalla

Jayne: specialist homelessness service supporting young people, families and individuals experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness.

Brooke Emery: South Coast CLSD Program Regional Coordinator

Aboriginal Affairs NSW

Tamara Chatfield: Regional Support Officer Illawarra Southern Region.

St Vincent de Paul

Sarah Dunn: Manager homelessness programs between Canberra and Goulburn. Have started casework out of Merimbula. Work with lots of people experiencing tenancy issues.

NSW Council of Social Service

Andrea Angeles: Policy Lead. Working on pre-budget submission ahead of 2025 budget that will include a renter's focus.

	<p>Salvation Army Susan Cheetham: Financial Counsellor Moneycare. Cover Eurobodalla and beyond. Not seeing so many tenancy issues as mortgage issues, strata issues and general debts for people who are homeless, which continues to grow as an issue.</p> <p>Medical Mental Health Centre Moruya Stacey Thomson: Clinical Lead. Works with people 16+ who have mental health and AOD concerns. Provide counselling, peer work and care navigation. Finds that tenancy issues impact on people's health and recovery.</p> <p>Revenue NSW Danielle Falzon: Aboriginal Customer Advisory Officer. Covers the Illawarra, far south coast, and southern highlands. Role to assist clients with fines and debt on outreach. Danielle.falzon@revenue.nsw.gov.au</p> <p>IRT Home Care Maxine Pendergast: Aged care and home care packages. Focus is on keeping people safe and well at home. Some elderly clients raise child protection family law issues. Mpdendergast@irt.org.au 0436 800 421</p> <p>TAFE NSW Daphne Parsons: Aboriginal Education and Engagement Coordinator. Based at Moruya, works with communities to discover what training they want in place. Covers Ulladulla to Batemans Bay, Bega and Eden. Daphne.parsons5@tafensw.edu.au</p> <p>Wellways Steve Robinson: Based in Bega. srobinson@wellways.org</p> <p>Verto Southwest Tenants Advice and Advocacy Service Simona Angeli: Based in Goulburn (also offices in Bathurst, Orange, Wagga Wagga and Albury). Provide advice and advocacy, help with preparation of documents for tribunal applications and referrals.</p>	
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<p>3. Current Issues</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Ongoing Repair Issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Numerous examples and concerns raised around ongoing repair issues particularly on the south coast. - Example of a good solution in the planning stages discussed – Daphne Parsons (Aboriginal Education and Engagement Coordinator- TAFE NSW) is working with Wallaga Lake Lands Council and the CEO and are organising opportunities for community members to develop relevant skills, such as carpentry courses at TAFE, enabling them to undertake home repairs and improve their employment prospects. - IRT Home Care works with clients whose homes are unsafe. If funds are available through a homecare package sometimes this can be used for repairs. It is worth seeing if clients have available funds through a home care package or other support package for children. <p style="text-align: center;">NCAT Operations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Department of Communities and Justice is conducting a review of the role of the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal in tenancy disputes. - Legal Aid NSW has made a submission which includes recommendations to create a separate social housing list, provide better access to interpreters, waive or provide a reduced fee to social housing tenants who lodge applications, provide compulsory training for members on issues impacting tenants in social housing and improve the online portal. - Kerry noted issues with publication of hearing lists. Some matters aren't listed online, and it is unclear if a hearing will be in-person or via AVL. - Claire noted same issue regarding publication of virtual versus in-person hearings. Recommended calling Wollongong NCAT directly as they are responsive. - The Tenants Union is making a submission to the review and has noted this issue. - Resolving this issue is key because it impacts on effectiveness of a duty service* at the Tribunal. - Both tenant advocates and solicitors noted challenges in getting approval to appear for clients. 	<p>Tenants experiencing ongoing issues with repairs should get advice from a legal service or tenant advice and advocacy service. Call LawAccess on 1300 888 529 for a referral.</p> <p>Call Wollongong NCAT Registry directly if there are issues with a tenancy matter in the Tribunal. 1300 006 228 ccdwoollongong@ncat.nsw.gov.au</p>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - *Duty service at a court or a tribunal refers to someone who is rostered to provide in-person advice for people who have matters listed. 	
<p>4. Local Tenancy Service Referral Guide and Referral updates</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Specific Tenancy Referral Guide</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In 2020 the South Coast CLSD Program Partnership prepared a referral guide specific to tenancy issues and tenancy referrals on the South Coast. - CLSD Regional Coordinator and Program Unit are currently updating the guide, which will be emailed to partners and available online on the south coast CLSD Program web page. <p>Aboriginal Legal Service Family Violence Service – Assistance with Housing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mainly help clients with family law but can also help with civil issues, including tenancy. To be eligible for help clients need to be experiencing domestic or family violence or have experienced sexual assault - The tenancy issue could be directly related to DV, like damage to property or getting out of a tenancy, but it could also be more indirectly related i.e. the client is falling behind in rent because of hardship caused by DV. - There are 3 solicitors in the team and can provide representation. <p style="text-align: center;">Other Helpful Tenancy Resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Doing it Tough Directory from Shoalhaven Council and Southern Cross Housing covers housing, welfare support, support services for different groups, community centres, medical services, public facilities like showers and helplines. - NSW Tenants Union has extensive information about tenancy matters including rent and bond, eviction, repairs and utilities, public housing and wanting to end a tenancy, as well as referral information. - Illawarra Legal Centre – Tenant Advice and Advocacy Service - Verto – South West NSW Tenants Advice Service - Murra Mia South NSW Aboriginal Tenants Service - LawAccess NSW information for private and social housing tenants 	<p>Regional Coordinator and CLSD Program Unit to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Add Macarthur, Verto and ALS to South Coast guide - Prepare a separate guide for Queanbeyan/Palerang, Snowy Monaro areas. <p>Regional Coordinator share PDF Doing it Tough resource with minutes.</p> <p>Daphne (TAFE NSW) is happy for services to email or post resources to her that she can take to clients on outreach, she regularly visits Local Aboriginal Land Councils on the South Coast.</p> <p>Daphne.parsons5@tafensw.edu.au</p>

5. Case Study Exercise	<p>What are the legal issues the clients are experiencing?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Eviction from property. - Stolen property on premises. - The property isn't appropriate for Leanne to live in due to her disability. - Social security payment: Leanne isn't meeting her obligations but might not be on the correct payment? - Is Leanne's daughter Clare on the lease? Clare also has no ID ad no income support. <p>What referrals would you recommend?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Immediate advice from a tenant's advice and advocacy service or legal service regarding the eviction and Leanne and her daughter's social security payments. - NDIS provider/aged care provider as Leanne may be eligible for both and funding could help to obtain a more suitable property/adjustments. - If criminal proceedings are started against Bob because of the bikes, Legal Aid NSW can apply for a stay on those proceedings until the eviction matter is determined. - Noted that Meridian Aged Services Navigation specifically work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients 50 years and older and other people 65 and over to locate appropriate supports in their community. - Senior's Rights Service has an advocate based on the South Coast - The Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages has a general fee waiver policy that eligible people can use to apply for a free birth certificate at any time. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people can also get assistance through the Justice Koori Connect Hub in Nowra when it's on. Births, Deaths and Marriages, Service NSW, Revenue NSW and Services Australia attend the Hub. The Registry's general outreach events are published here. 	<p>Regional Coordinator and CLSD Program Unit incorporate idea to hold a CLSD meeting about legal issues and referrals regarding aged care the NDIS and possibly the intersection with homelessness into 2025 work plan.</p>
6. Next meeting	<p>Quarter 1 - Tuesday 25th February 2025</p>	
7. Meetings 2025	<p>Quarter 2 - Tuesday 27th May 2025 Quarter 3 - Tuesday 26th August 2025 Quarter 4 - Tuesday 18th November 2025</p>	

CLSD Program Priorities 2025

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- Have a geographic focus on the far south coast – looking at maximising F2F engagement with legal and community services
- Provide a mechanism for promoting regional events and outreach
- Connect people leaving prison who have had their licence disqualified with legal help to have it reinstated.
- Provide training for community services about supporting clients who need to attend court and court processes.
- Targeted work to support people to reduce/better manage their fine debt and encouraging services to screen for fines.
- Use a quarterly CLSD Program meeting to discuss legal issues and referrals specific to aged care, the NDIS and the intersection with homelessness.

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