Issue 4, July 2013

TU e-news is our regular update to keep you informed about the issues we’re working on. If you’re not already on our mailing list, you can sign up here.

What's new for renters

New rights for Boarding House occupants
The Boarding Houses Act 2012 commenced in full on July 1st 2013. We now have laws protecting the rights of boarding house occupants in New South Wales. The Tenants' Union has produced a factsheet on the new laws, and updated the Boarding Houses chapter in our online Tenants' Rights Manual. We've also marked the occasion with a post on our blog, The Brown Couch.

New legislation for Residential Parks?
Fair Trading NSW released the exposure draft Residential (Land Lease) Communities Bill in April 2013, with the consultation period open until early June. The TU's Residential Parks Legal Officer provided support and assistance to the Parks & Village

Resources for tenants

Our Tenants Rights Factsheets continue to provide much needed information to tenants in New South Wales, with over 6000 Fact Sheets downloaded in June 2013.

On the Brown Couch
Service throughout the consultation period.
For more information about the draft Residential (Land Lease) Communities Bill, see this recent edition of the Parks & Village Service's newsletter Outsite Lite.

New charge for public housing tenants who 'under-occupy'
Housing NSW has announced that it will start to impose an additional charge on tenants with more bedrooms than they are entitled to, who decline to relocate to a smaller property. These charges are expected to commence in September 2013. Some of the TU's comments and questions about this new charge can be found on our blog, The Brown Couch.
Details of HNSW's 'standard bedroom entitlements for public housing' can be found on the Housing Pathways website.

A New Planning System for NSW?
The TU has made submissions to the White Paper - A New Planning System for NSW and the Metropolitan Strategy for Sydney to 2031. These documents will set New South Wales, and Sydney in particular, on a path of urban renewal in areas of high demand for housing.
Without built-in targets for affordable housing, and a commitment to invest in the construction of new social housing, low-income residents of urban renewal areas will be adversely affected by these new proposed planning strategies. Our submissions can be found at our website.

Our conversation about The Value of TAAS continues on The Brown Couch. If you haven't been following it, drop by and have a read about the emergence of tenant activism, our quest to save one million tenancies, and the three golden rules of renting.

What's new for you?
We'd love to hear about renting in your community. What are your local challenges and what are the positive stories about renting in your area? Please drop us a line if you'd like to share anything with us. There are a couple of ways you can do this:
• on Facebook
• on Twitter
• contact our Policy Officer, Ned Cutcher (email ned_cutcher[at]clc.net.au or phone 8117 3712 for a chat).

Around the Tenants' Union

Visiting the Tenants' Advice & Advocacy Services
The TU's Aboriginal Legal Officer paid a visit to the folks at Murra Mia last week and while there, took the opportunity to soak up some of the beauty of New South Wales' south coast.

Service visits provide a great opportunity for the Tenants' Union to get a first-hand look at what the local TAASs are up to. For the Aboriginal legal team in particular, it
provides a great opportunity to see local land council housing and to meet with local Aboriginal communities.

**Triple J's 'Hack'**
Late in May, the TU's Litigation Solicitor appeared on *Triple J's 'Hack'* program to discuss Australia's unfair renting laws. We also wrote a follow-up post on our blog, [The Brown Couch](#), highlighting some of the issues around Australian landlords ability to end tenancies without grounds.

**Come and work with us!**
We are currently looking for a Resource Development Officer to oversee all our hard-copy and online publications. For details [please visit our website](#).