

FOR QUALITY LEGAL HELP IN YOUR COMMUNITY

Community Law Australia



MEDIA RELEASE

Wednesday 4th September 2013

Marrickville CLC urges candidates to reveal their plans to address legal crisis

Marrickville Legal Centre has written to its local candidates in the seats of Banks, Grayndler and Reid to ask them to outline their plans to address the access to justice crisis.

As the local community legal centre, Marrickville Legal Centre provides vital legal help to residents across these three electorates and are concerned that access to justice has not yet been addressed in the local area.

Community Law Australia commended the Marrickville LC and said that despite recent increases in funding to individual centres, there was still huge unmet demand for free legal help among Australians who can't afford to pay for a private lawyer.

Community Law Australia spokesperson Carolyn Bond said: "Access to justice is a major issue for people in the local area, which is why each candidate is being contacted to ensure that they make their position known to local residents.

Michael Walton, Principal Solicitor of Marrickville LC said that the top legal issues they encountered ranged from housing, employment, consumer, debt and family violence.

"Marrickville Legal Centre has been providing free legal help to people who can't afford a lawyer since 1979," Mr Walton said.

CLA Spokesperson Ms Bond said: "Without proper access to justice, people may miss out on legal help when they need it most.

"Unresolved legal problems can often escalate, causing financial, social and health problems. CLCs can help people address these problems before it's too late.

"It saves money overall to provide access to legal help for Australians who can't afford a lawyer. It's also vital in ensuring that everyone is equal under the law.

"Legal problems can crop up at any time – but access to quality legal help shouldn't depend on your bank balance or where you live. This is why we are encouraging local candidates to make their commitment to access to justice known so that local residents can make an informed choice on Election Day," Ms Bond said.

Community legal centres provide free legal help to people who can't afford a private lawyer. They assist with problems such as housing, employment, consumer issues, debt and family violence, and are often a source of early advice and assistance to help prevent problems from escalating. Community Law Australia is a campaign advocating for a proper safety net for legal help, by a coalition of CLC peak bodies and led by the National Association of CLCs.

MEDIA: Spokespeople include: Carolyn Bond on 0412 032 987 and Principal Solicitor Michael Walton on (02) 8577 5104. For media inquiries, contact Anaya Latter: 0432 121 636. www.communitylawaustralia.org.au