



## STRATEGIC PLAN (ABRIDGED)

### Vision:

Equality before the law, positive change and access to justice for those with the least access to justice.

### Values:

- Partnership work
- Trust
- Respect
- Community/client self-determination
- Empowerment
- Strong, resilient advocacy
- Excellence
- Innovation
- Responsiveness

### Mission

The West Heidelberg Community Legal Service (WHCLS) provides integrated quality legal services and legal education for those with the least access to justice in the City of Banyule. It seeks to advocate for just laws, policies and procedures in the administration of justice, just outcomes for its clients, and necessary change to bring about social justice. We do this by working together, with trust and respect, for excellence in service delivery.

Focus: Over the next five years (beyond the three years of this Plan), in addition to the WHCLS's core work, the WHCLS will grow the legal service so that it can address the legal issues necessary to bring about decent, affordable and accessible housing, especially public housing and social housing. This has been identified as a priority by our local community and workers in our region. It is a goal we share.

### West Heidelberg Community Legal Service Goals 2010 - 2013

**1. Access to the law and legal system:** We strive ... to empower and support individuals in the community (with least access to the law and legal system) to access the law and legal system through the provision of information, advice and casework services to them in order to protect and advance their rights.

**2. An empowered, active community:** We will ... empower and support community members by encouraging their participation in the legal system and in the resolution of their issues and problems using the law and the legal system, by improving knowledge and understanding of the legal system, and by increasing their skills, confidence and capacity to be active community members who use the law and legal system.

**3. Partnerships that get results:** We want ... to participate in partnerships which promote development of client services and which improve client outcomes, through effective lobbying and advocacy for law reform, improved policy for the administration of justice and for the provision of community services and support, and equitable and better targeted funding. Key to this are our longstanding partnerships with Banyule Community Health and working within an integrated service model recognising that people's legal needs are not isolation from health and social needs. The other key partnership is with La Trobe University (LTU) which enables us to educate student lawyers and utilise research to enhance and inform our service.

**4. Lawyers who are aware:** We are committed ... to providing opportunities for students at La Trobe University to enhance their practical legal skills and their understanding of social justice through participation in a clinical legal education program (CLEP), and for lawyers practicing within the private profession (be they alumni of the LTU/WHCLS CLEP or not) to have similar opportunities through volunteering with WHCLS or through their firms' active collaboration with WHCLS.

**5. A robust future:** We must ... ensure that West Heidelberg Community Legal Service is effective, efficient, adaptable and sustainable, and that its successes are acknowledged by those who need to know how and why we do our work.