



Increased inclusiveness and geographical reach of our services

Renting in the regions: Giving voice to renters' struggles

In regional Victoria, renters face mounting pressures: low vacancy rates, poor housing quality and rising costs.

ARC Justice has made housing justice a priority, and in our recent communications work this came together in the *Renting in the regions* campaign – an example of how communication can extend our reach and make our services more inclusive.

Though not planned as one project, a series of media initiatives created a consistent narrative that amplified local voices and showed the broader community what's at stake. By connecting our frontline work with our advocacy and communications, we reached new audiences who might not otherwise engage with a community legal centre.

In May 2025, ARC Justice supported Bendigo mother Ashlee Long to share her story with the Bendigo Advertiser after she and her children were forced to live in a car when a pipe burst in her rental.

Ashlee's story ran the same week ARC Justice hosted Victorian Parliamentary Secretary for Renters Kat Theophanous and Member for Bendigo West Maree Edwards at our Bendigo office. The timing meant we could share Ashlee's experience directly with decision-makers, showing how local stories can inform systemic change and highlight the realities of regional life.

That same month, CEO Damian Stock appeared in ABC News coverage of Victoria's housing inquiry, emphasising how regional renters are often hit hardest. Managing Lawyer (Housing) Anna Dorevitch and Director of Strategy and Impact Kate Clohesy also featured in the VCOSS Renters' Rundown video, bringing legal and advocacy expertise to a statewide audience.

Together, these moments built a clear, consistent message: regional renters are being left behind and systemic change is needed. They also demonstrated the power of communication to amplify regional perspectives, strengthen partnerships and make our work more visible across Victoria.

We measure success not just in coverage, but in impact: front-page stories that frame renting as a justice issue, direct engagement with regional audiences and our expertise sought by state media and policymakers.

Renting in the regions shows how targeted, evidence-based communication can extend our geographical reach, make our services more accessible and elevate regional voices in policy debates – advancing Outcome 2 of the Fairer Communities domain.

