



## **In this issue read about...**

- MLRC April Fools Day Comedy Gala
- MLRC Training in Social Welfare Law delivered by Prof. Gerry Whyte
- MLRC Training in Housing Law & Related Social Welfare Law
- MLRC News
- MLRC Befriending Service

- MLRC April Fools Day Comedy Gala

### **April Fools Comedy Gala in aid of MLRC - last few tickets remaining!**

Mercy Law Resource Centre will be holding a Comedy Gala on Wednesday 1 April 2015, starting at 8 p.m., in the Sugar Club, Leeson Street, Dublin 2! We would be delighted to see you there!

Tickets are €15 each and are available to buy online [here](#)

# THE ANNUAL APRIL FOOLS DAY COMEDY GALA

IN AID OF THE MERCY LAW RESOURCE CENTRE



Tickets €15  
Purchase at [mercylaw.ie](http://mercylaw.ie)  
or call 01 4537459

Doors open 7.30 for 8pm start, unreserved seating

**APRIL 1ST SUGAR CLUB LEESON ST. TICKETS FROM MERCYLAW.IE**



*With David O'Doherty  
Jarlath Regan  
Barry Murphy  
Plus Secret Special Guests*



- **MLRC Training in Social Welfare Law delivered by Prof. Gerry Whyte**

**MLRC training - Training in social welfare law delivered by Professor Gerry Whyte - 7, 9, 14, 16 and 21 April 2015 – at Sophia Housing, 25 Cork Street, Dublin 8**

MLRC is holding a course in social welfare law, which will be delivered by Professor Gerry Whyte, Associate Professor School of Law, Trinity College Dublin. The training, consisting of five workshops, will provide a detailed overview of social welfare law. The training will be of particular benefit for those dealing with and advising on social welfare law issues.

The course will be delivered through a series of five workshops. The topics that will be covered are:

- Sources of social welfare law
- Claims and appeals
- Social Insurance
- Social Assistance
- Rates of payment

- Supplementary Welfare Allowance
- Unemployment and low pay
- Illness, incapacity and caring
- Family payments
- The elderly and survivors

Participants would be expected to attend all five workshops to receive maximum benefit from the training. The training will be held over three weeks from **2 to 4pm** on:

- **Tuesday 7 April**
- **Thursday 9 April**
- **Tuesday 14 April**
- **Thursday 16 April**
- **Tuesday 21 April**

The training will be held at **Sophia Housing, 25 Cork Street, Dublin 8.**

The cost per participant is €50 for all five workshops.

The spaces for this training are limited so please do book early if you wish to attend. If you are interested in booking a place(s) for this Social Welfare Law training please contact Shauna Curran at Mercy Law Resource Centre on 01 4537459 or by email [shauna@mercylaw.ie](mailto:shauna@mercylaw.ie) by **5pm on Monday 30 March.**

- **MLRC Training in Housing Law and Related Social Welfare Law**

As part of MLRC's work, we provide training in housing law and related social welfare law to organisations working in the field of homelessness. If you are interested in organising a training session by MLRC, please contact Shauna on 01 4537459 or at [shauna@mercylaw.ie](mailto:shauna@mercylaw.ie). We would be very happy to hear from you and discuss the training that would be most useful for you.

**MLRC holds training session on housing law for staff of the Dublin Simon Community**

On 22nd January, MLRC held a full day training session in housing law & related social welfare law for the staff of the Dublin Simon Community. The Dublin Simon Community works to prevent and address homelessness in Dublin, Kildare and Wicklow. They provide services at all stages of homelessness and enable people to move to a place they can call home. By listening to people they do everything to support homeless people to move to independent living, striving to empower people to access, secure and retain a home of their own by reducing the reliance on short-term emergency accommodation and providing permanent supported housing. Our training session for the Dublin Simon Community gave practical advice and information to help staff deal effectively with client's varied housing issues. In particular staff noted the following items as being particularly useful to explore and understand:

- Fair procedures
- Clarity around the new Housing Assistance Payment
- Tenancy warning system and eviction procedures, though not yet in force, under the new Housing Act
- Appeals procedures and how to request information from State bodies
- Better knowledge of what Mercy Law Resource Centre can assist with
- The avenues a tenant can proceed with regarding housing issues and the Council
- Proportionality & fair procedures
- Need for assistance letter from the Council for a separated partner
- Understanding of tenant's rights regarding issues of anti-social behaviour

For more on this, please click here: [MLRC training for Dublin Simon](#)

- **MLRC News**

**MLRC is delighted to welcome Rebecca Keatinge as our new solicitor and colleague.**



Rebecca is a solicitor with extensive experience in immigration and human rights law. She graduated from Trinity College Dublin in 2002 with a BA in History and Political Science. She then moved to London and completed an MSc in Development Studies at the School of Oriental and African Studies in 2004.

After working briefly for the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) in London, Rebecca joined the legal aid charity Refugee and Migrant Justice in London as an Appeals Caseworker and Team Leader, providing legal advice

and representation to vulnerable asylum seekers and refugees. She then worked for the United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR) in Cambodia.

In 2010, Rebecca joined Brophy Solicitors in Dublin and apprenticed with the firm. In 2010, Rebecca was awarded the Law Society EU law prize for the highest mark in the First Examination EU law exam. In 2012, she was a prize-winner in the Law Society Client Consultation competition. She qualified as a solicitor in December 2013. During her time at Brophy Solicitors, she worked predominantly in the areas of immigration and human rights.

Rebecca has also been involved with several charities including the Medical Foundation for Victims of Torture, Legal Aid of Cambodia, mental health charity Aware, and Irish charity

Ruhama. She was previously a member of the Anti-Trafficking Legal Group (ATLEP). Rebecca is currently a member of the Public Interest Law Alliance (PILA).

We look forward to working with Rebecca to build on MLRC's work helping those who are on the margins of our society.

### **MLRC warmly welcomes Liz Fletcher, as volunteer administrator joining our administration team**



MLRC is delighted to welcome Liz Fletcher on board as part of our administration team.

Liz Fletcher trained as a nurse and midwife in Limerick and worked in health care for a number of years. She volunteered for Rwanda during the crisis there in 1994. She returned to Africa in 2003 and spent ten years in Kenya, working in Provincial Administration for nine of those years. She returned to Ireland and recently obtained a Master's Degree in Christian Spirituality. She has had wide experience in all aspects of administration over the last twenty years, both in Ireland and abroad.

We look forward to working with Liz and would like to thank her for volunteering to help MLRC's work with people who are homeless and at risk of becoming homeless.

### **Alice Leahy, Trust, talks to MLRC Gathering**



MLRC were delighted to host another informal Christmas gathering made extra special by a talk given by Alice Leahy of Trust. Alice gave a wonderful presentation about her work with the homeless over the years, which moved and inspired all present.

To read Alice's presentation, entitled "Wasting Time with People?" please click [here](#)

### **TCD Law Day – Generously supporting MLRC**

We consider ourselves extremely lucky to have been the chosen charity for this year's TCD Law Society's Law Day on 19th February 2015. We would like to extend a huge thanks to the organising committee and all the volunteers who collected and participated on the Law Day and to Maples who sponsored the day, we really do appreciate all your hard work and we hope all involved had an enjoyable day!



- **MLRC Befriending Service**

**MLRC thanks our Befrienders and Maureen Sheehy for supporting our Befriending Service at an excellent training day in January**

MLRC's Befriending service is a unique service that is central to our work in helping those who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. MLRC has been in existence since 2009 and has an average of seven to 10 Befriendees a year. Some clients are fairly short term but we have a core of longer term clients who appreciate the support given and remain with their Befriender for a longer period. This service is offered to clients who seem to be relatively unsupported by family or other organisations and find it difficult to follow through with the legal process. Clients vary greatly, some have literacy difficulties, others relatively mild mental health difficulties, emotional difficulties, relationship difficulties, language difficulties, others may be victims of domestic violence or just people who have fallen on hard times and find it difficult to cope. We network with some Counselling services or Mediation services when it seems necessary or useful.

In January, MLRC were delighted to welcome on board three new Befrienders to our group of Befriender volunteers. The new Befrienders attended a special training day on Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> January 2015, given by Maureen Sheehy. Some of our existing Befrienders attended to refresh their skills and share experiences and a number of MLRC staff members also attended. This annual training day always proves extremely helpful in developing skills and preparing Befrienders for the task in hand. MLRC extends a huge thanks to all our Befrienders, for their care and compassion of our more vulnerable clients and MLRC would like to thank Maureen Sheehy for an interactive, interesting and worthwhile training day.

For more on this training day and our befriending service, please click here: [Befriender](#)

[Training](#)

## About MLRC

Mercy Law Resource Centre is an Independent Law Centre and registered charity providing free legal advice, representation and befriending services to people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness in the areas of social housing and social welfare law. For more information about our work please see our website at [www.mercylaw.ie](http://www.mercylaw.ie).

**Contact Us**

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