

TENANT HANDBOOK

V6 February 2019



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Welcome to Whitsunday Housing Company Limited

This handbook is designed to provide you with helpful information regarding your tenancy and to ensure you are aware of your rights and responsibilities.

This handbook is provided to all tenants at the beginning of the tenancy.

Office Hours: Monday to Friday 9AM – 4PM*

***It is advisable to make an appointment prior to attending**

Contact Phone: (07) 4946 7194

Fax: (07) 4946 7010

Email: admin@whcl.com.au

Website: www.whcl.com.au

If you wish to seek additional tenancy information, please contact QSTARS (Qld Statewide Tenancy Advice & Referral Service) on 1300 744 263. Alternatively, the Residential Tenancy Authority is also available on 1300 366 311 or you can visit the website at www.rta.gov.au.

About Whitsunday Housing Company Ltd

Whitsunday Housing Company Ltd (WHCL) is a not-for-profit (PBI) company managing emergency, transitional and long term social housing.

Our organisation assists people to acquire and maintain affordable, accessible and secure housing to improve their lifestyle by providing support, information, advocacy and referral.

WHCL develops and maintains partnerships with community organisations and Government bodies to achieve the best possible outcomes for our customers, clients, tenants, residents and stakeholders.

Our Mission

Mission Statement

The Whitsunday Housing Company Limited (WHCL) seeks to provide housing to those on low incomes and / or those who are limited for other reasons in acquiring appropriate, affordable, safe, secure and accessible long term housing.

Our Values

These values guide the way we think and act:

Respect

Every person is unique and of equal value and has the right to be treated with understanding, dignity and respect.

Fairness & equity

Every person will have a fair share of opportunities and resources and be treated fairly and equitably, despite their age, sex, race, abilities, sexual orientation, and status or income level.

Responsibility

We take responsibility and be accountable for the actions and consequences of our organisation for other people.

Participation

We recognise that when people have a sense of personal power, they are more motivated to act responsibly. Therefore, we support every person's right to information to enable participation in decisions that affect them and to have power in shaping their lives.

Excellence

We strive for a level of excellence through continuous learning and improvement that helps elevate WHCL to a leadership role in the community-housing sector.

Statement of Customer Service

The Whitsunday Housing Company Limited and its staff will do their best to provide you with good service:

Showing you respect by:

- Being Courteous and polite
- Explaining decisions affecting you
- Explaining things that you need to know
- Giving prompt service

Being honest and acting with integrity by:

- Providing accurate, complete, timely and clear information
- Following through and doing what they say they will do
- Keeping you informed
- Working with you to find the best housing solution

Valuing differences by:

- Providing services that are sensitive to your needs
- Discussing your housing options and choices
- Working with you to find the best housing solution

Providing you with good service is important to us.

You can help us serve you better by:

- Giving us correct and complete information on time
- Letting us know if your situation changes
- Treating our staff with courtesy and respect
- Letting us know if you don't understand any information we give you
- Telling us how we can improve our services

You are entitled to:

- An explanation of the reasons for our decisions
- A review of a decision if you think it was made incorrectly
- Have your personal information kept confidential unless authorised by you or by law

Housing Programs Delivered by Whitsunday Housing Company Limited

Long Term Community Housing Program (LTCHP) & Affordable Housing Program (AHP)

Provides affordable and appropriate housing for eligible people whose needs are not adequately met by other housing options and are referred from the housing register by the department's Housing Service Centre's, for the duration of their need. For more information please refer to the Department of Housing and Public Works fact sheet at

<http://www.hpw.qld.gov.au/SiteCollectionDocuments/LongTermCommunityHousing.pdf>

Transitional Housing Scheme

Provides transitional housing to tenants and WHCL will work with you to develop a tenancy plan which is reviewed on a regular basis and helps you to decide on the best way to move towards living in long-term social housing or private rental. For more information please refer to the department of Housing and Public Works fact sheet.

Crisis Accommodation Program (CAP)

The objective of CAP is to provide accommodation to eligible persons which will assist them to move toward independent living. Tenancies are generally for a period of up to 12 weeks or until a suitable social or private housing exit point becomes available.

Tenants housed in this program either self-refer, or are referred by a range of community and government agencies.

National Rental Affordability Scheme (NRAS)

Provides affordable rentals at a minimum 20% discount from the typical market rent of the property. You must ensure you meet the eligibility criteria set down by the Government for participation in the scheme. For more information please refer to the Department of Social Services fact sheet

<https://www.dss.gov.au/housing-support/programs-services/housing/national-rental-affordability-scheme/nras-tenants>

Privacy Statement

Whitsunday Housing Company Limited (WHCL) has always valued the privacy of personal information. That's why we've put together this statement. It explains how we collect, hold, use and disclose your personal information and who we share it with. WHCL will be bound by the Privacy Act 1988.

This statement is your assurance that we never take your privacy for granted and always take the utmost care in protecting your personal information.

Why do we collect personal information?

Personal information is information or an opinion about an identified individual, or an individual who is reasonably identifiable. WHCL collects personal information so that we can:

Identify you and conduct appropriate checks;

- Understand your requirements and provide you with a service;
- Set up, administer and manage our services and systems;
- Assess and investigate any claims you make ;
- Manage, train and develop our employees;
- Manage complaints and disputes;
- Get a better understanding of you, your needs, your behaviors and how you interact with us, so we can engage in development of business strategy including managing the delivery of our services via the ways we communicate with you.

What happens if you don't give us your personal information?

If we ask for your personal information and you don't give it to us, we may not be able to provide you with any, some, or all of the services we provide.

How we handle your personal information

Unless impracticable or unreasonable to do so, WHCL will collect your personal information directly from you and, in some cases, from other people or organisations. Upon your request, we will take reasonable steps to let you know of how we have sourced your personal information unless it is obvious from the circumstances that you would know or would reasonably expect us to have the information.

When you give WHCL personal information about other individuals, we rely on you to have made or make them aware that you will or may provide their personal information to us, the types of third parties we may provide it to, the relevant purposes we and the third parties we disclose it to will use it for, and how they can access it. If you have not done either of these things, you must tell us before you provide the relevant information.

We will use and disclose your personal information for the purposes we collect it as well as purposes that are related, where you would reasonably expect us to.

To whom can we disclose your personal information?

WHCL will use and disclose your personal information for the purposes we collect it as well as purposes that are related, where you would reasonably expect us to. Disclosures may also be made to government, law enforcement, dispute resolution, statutory or regulatory bodies, or as required by law.

We will make every effort to ensure that we only have business dealings with third parties that value privacy and information security the same way as we do.

We may use a variety of methods to collect your personal information from, and disclose your personal information to, these persons and organisations, including written forms, telephone calls and via electronic delivery. We may collect and disclose your personal information to these persons and organisations during the information life cycle, regularly, or on an ad hoc basis, depending on the purpose of collection.

How can I access and correct my personal information or resolve my privacy issues?

If you wish to seek access to, or correct the personal information we collected or disclosed about you, please contact the WHCL office in person, by telephone or email. The WHCL Privacy Policy contains details about how to make a complaint about a breach of the Act and how we deal with complaints.

Tenant Rights and Responsibilities

All Tenants residing in Whitsunday Housing Company Limited managed properties have entitlements as set out below:

- Tenants are entitled to safe and secure housing which is appropriate to individual needs
- Tenants are entitled to the rights and obligations set out in the Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation Act 2008
- Tenants have the right to be treated with courtesy and respect
- Tenants have the right to lodge complaints and appeal any decisions made
- Tenants are entitled to assistance in making linkages with local community groups, advocacy groups or other organisations who may assist them and contribute to sustaining their tenancy

All tenants residing in WHCL managed properties have the responsibility to:

- Treat people in the organisation with courtesy and respect
- Take reasonable care of the property and furniture (if applicable)
- Not alter, repair or affix anything without prior approval
- Allow neighbors and residents to live in comfort, peace and privacy
- Not use the premises for illegal activities or to operate a business
- Notify us as soon as possible of any damages or maintenance issues
- Advise us of all changes to the household income
- Not keep pets at the property without prior approval

Start of your Tenancy

Rent Assessment

Your rent is calculated based on the assessable income of everyone living in the property.

We will ask you to provide proof of income less than 28 days old, which can include:

- Statements from Centrelink or other government agencies
- Pay slips
- Superannuation documents showing current payments and any interest received

You may be eligible to receive Commonwealth Rent Assistance from Centrelink. The amount you are entitled to will be incorporated into your rent calculation. To check eligibility please contact Centrelink.

If you would like and additional information, please refer to the 'Your rent in Community Housing' fact sheet published by the Department of Housing and Public Works –

<http://www.hpw.qld.gov.au/SiteCollectionDocuments/YourRentInCommunityHousing.pdf>

Rent in advance

As stated in your tenancy agreement, your rent is required to be paid in advance at all times. In most cases, you will pay two weeks rent prior to moving into the property and will need to maintain this in advance for the duration of your tenancy. A tenancy statement showing your payments is available from our office upon request.

Paying the Rent

We encourage tenants to pay their rent via Centerpay deductions. This means your rent will be deducted from your Centrelink benefits and deposited directly into our account. Listed below is our customer reference number (CRN) required to set up the payment/s:

Rent	555 075 062K
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If you require assistance, staff are available to set up a Centerpay deduction on your behalf.

Other methods to pay rent include cash at our office and direct debit into our bank account. Please see below bank details:

Bank	Bendigo Bank
Account name	Whitsunday Housing Company Ltd
BSB	633 000
Account number	163 719 198

If you choose to deposit directly into our account please ensure your reference number is clearly used when making the payment. Your Tenancy Manager will be able to provide you with your reference number, if required.

Rental Bonds

A rental bond is payable on all tenancies excluding crisis accommodation. The amount charged is equivalent to four weeks rent and is paid prior to moving into the property.

The Department of Housing and Public Works may be able to assist you with a Bond Loan. To check your eligibility of for more information, please visit

<https://www.qld.gov.au/housing/renting/bond-loan>

We will lodge your bond with the Residential Tenancies Authority. Once this is processed you will receive an acknowledgement of bond receipt in the mail.

Connecting Utilities

The electricity, phone and gas (if applicable) will need to be connected in your name and you are responsible for paying all connection and usage costs during your tenancy. Please refer to the back page of this booklet for contact information to connect your utilities.

When you first move into the property please check the switches are all on in the fuse box. If you are moving into a house, this is likely to be located on the front or side of the house. In units, it may be located inside the property.

Insurance

Our organisation does not take responsibility for any loss or damage of tenant belongings. Please ensure your personal possessions are covered by contents insurance.

Entry Condition report (Form 1a)

The entry condition report (Form 1a) records the condition of the property at the start of the tenancy. Please complete, sign and return this form to our office within three days. We will post you a copy within 14 days of receiving a completed form. This is an important document if there is a dispute regarding the condition of the property when you move out.

Council Details

Please contact Whitsunday Regional Council **1300 972 753** on for regular rubbish collection dates.

If you are new to the area, the local council may be able to provide information on local events happening in the community.

Things to know about your wheelie bin

Whitsunday Regional Council, in conjunction with Cleanaway and JJ Richards, provides a domestic waste collection service for the Whitsunday Community.

Three basic principles for every Whitsunday resident to follow:

- Know what you can put in your bin
- Do not overfill your wheelie bin
- Know your wheelie bin collection day

Know your responsibilities

What are my responsibilities on collection day?

- Place your wheelie bin out the night before it is due to be collected or before 6am on the morning of collection
- Place wheelie bin as close to the edge of the road as possible facing the road
- Ensure your wheelie bin is clear of trees and obstructions including fire hydrants, power poles and parked vehicles
- Put your wheelie bin back on your property after it has been emptied
- Please do not leave your wheelie bin on the kerbside before or after collection more than 24hrs
- Only JJ Richards/Cleanaway wheelie bins will be serviced. If you require an extra bin, contact Council
- Additional bags or boxes placed on the kerbside next to your bin will not be collected.

If your bin's lid is open it is seen as overload and may not be collected. Overfilling your wheelie bin means your household waste may fall out becoming litter on the roadside. Do not overfull your wheelie bin, the maximum weight allowed is 70kg.

Please do not put the following items in your wheelie bin:

- Heavy materials such as concrete, building material or soil
- Industrial waste
- Tires
- Wire
- Waste oil
- Batteries
- Engine parts
- Hot ashes or acid
- Green waste*

**Green waste can be taken at any of the landfills or transfer stations free of charge*

Maintain a clean hygienic wheelie bin. Unwanted smells and flies can be prevented by:

- Wrapping all meat, fish, dairy products, vegetable and other fruit scraps
- Hose bin out thoroughly at least once a month
- Use rubbish bags

What if my wheelie bin is lost or damaged?

Please call Whitsunday Housing Company if your wheelie bin is lost or damaged.

What happens if I don't adhere to these conditions?

Your bin will not be collected. It is the resident's responsibility to empty bins that are deemed too full, too heavy by the collection driver; or contain unacceptable materials.

Kerbside Recycling

Whitsunday Regional Council is implementing kerbside recycling across the entire region from 13 November 2017, in all residential areas with existing wheelie bin collection.

Residents will receive a second wheelie bin with a yellow lid, to place all recyclable materials. Your recycling bin will be collected on a fortnightly basis, on the same day as your normal rubbish bin collection.

Accepted Recyclables:

A

Advertising material (brochures/leaflets etc.)
Aerosol cans
Aluminum cans, trays and foil
(scraped clean)

B

Biscuit trays (plastic)
Books
Bottles
Bottle tops
Boxes (cardboard) flattened

C

Cans
Cardboard & Cartons
Cereal boxes
Cooking oil containers
Cosmetic jars (clear glass only)

D

Detergent bottles
Deodorant cans & roll-ons

E

Egg cartons
Envelopes (including with plastic windows)

F

Foil (clean)
Food cans

G

Gift wrapping paper
Glass bottles and jars
Greeting cards

I

Ice cream containers
Insect spray bottles and cans

J

Jars
Juice cartons
Junk mail

L

Long life cartons (milk, juice, stocks & sauces)
Lunch boxes (plastic)

M

Magazines
Metal pots and pans (no glass lids)
Milk cartons/glass/containers

N

Newspapers

O

Office paper

P

Paper
Paper cups
Paper bags & Paper plates
Pet food cans
Phone books
Pizza boxes
Plastic plant pots
Plastics Grade 1 – 5
Pot and Pans

R

Rigid plastic containers (kitchen and storage)

S

Serviettes (paper)
Shampoo and conditioner bottles
Steel cans
Spray cans

T

Telephone books
Tin cans
Tissue boxes
Toys (plastic - NO BATTERIES)
Tuna cans
Tupperware

W

Washing powder boxes/ bottles
Wrapping paper

Y

Yoghurt container

* All containers must be empty

Keys & Locks

If you require additional keys cut or locks changed, you will need to cover the associated costs ie the cost of the physical keys and an administration fee of \$15.

Please ensure you notify us before changing any locks on the property.

During your Tenancy

Rent Payments

If at any stage you are having problems paying your rent, please contact the office and speak with a Property Manager as soon as possible. Arrangements may be negotiated to assist you to maintain your tenancy.

It is a breach of your tenancy agreement if any rent payments are late or not made. If your account falls eight days or more into arrears you may be issued with a Notice to remedy breach (Form 11).

If you do not contact us or respond to phone calls or letters, further action may be taken to recover this debt. An application may be made to the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal (QCAT) which could lead to termination of your tenancy.

Routine Inspections

Routine inspections are carried out during your tenancy to ensure the property is being well cared for and there are no maintenance or health and safety issues.

Routine inspections are completed every three months. We will post you an Entry Notice (Form 9) which will provide the date and time of the inspection.

During the course of our inspections it may be necessary to take digital photographs of the premises and this may include your personal items.

Photographs taken during these inspections are not used for advertising or in any manner that would be in breach of the Privacy Act.

Ongoing Housing Assistance Reviews

The Department of Housing and Public Works requires we review your rent and eligibility for housing assistance each year.

Additional rent reviews will need to be conducted if the household income increases or decreases. Please notify us as soon as possible if there are any changes to your household income.

At the commencement of your tenancy we request you sign an authority form to allow us to download your income details from Centrelink to assist with processing your review. This authority can be reversed by you at any time.

Once your review has been conducted, we will send you a letter with the outcome of your eligibility for housing assistance and any changes in your rent and bond (if applicable).

Centrelink has enabled us, with your consent, to use the Electronic Verification of Rent (EVoR) system to alter your Centerpay deductions on your behalf. If you have provided us with authority to do this, we will make the required changes once your rent review has been completed.

Pets

Whitsunday Housing Company Limited recognises pets can contribute to the health and wellbeing of tenants. If you would like to keep a pet at the property, please complete the Pet Application form available from our office.

Please ensure you submit an application to seek approval from us prior to getting a pet.

Local government restrictions relating to keeping pets must be strictly adhered to. There may also be restrictions imposed by the owner of the property, and the type of property you are living in (e.g. units, share houses).

Unapproved pets kept at a property will be considered a breach of the tenancy and managed in accordance with the Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation Act. This may result in putting your tenancy at risk.

For more information, please refer to the Pet Factsheet available from our office.

Smoking



NO SMOKING

- Smoking inside the property or any common areas including stairways of the property is strictly prohibited. This policy includes tenants as well as guests, maintenance personnel and staff.
- Please smoke only on balconies & in courtyards or outdoors if you have a house

- This policy is to protect the health of our residents, staff and guests. Second-hand smoke is a Class A carcinogen, which means it is a cancer causing agent and there is no safe level of exposure. Second-hand smoke can travel through doorways, windows, wall joints, plumbing spaces and even light fixtures, so second-hand smoke from one unit can adversely affects the health of residents in other units.
- Please dispose of butts in rubbish bins only not in gardens & pathways.

Car Parking

Please make sure cars are parked only in the designated parking area and not on common property areas, for example footpaths, lawn areas etc. unregistered vehicles are not to be kept at the property.

In unit complexes, please ensure any visitors park their vehicles beyond the property boundaries or visitors parking area where available. Only tenant vehicles are permitted to be parked inside the unit grounds.

We may assign a designated parking space to a tenant for a period of time for reasons of health or mobility. For more information regarding this, please contact your property manager.

Subletting

Subletting is not permitted.

Absences from the property

Please notify us if you are planning to be away from your property for more than seven consecutive days. This allows WHCL know where you are in case of any damage to the property or if maintenance is scheduled to be carried out during the time you are away.

Approval is required for absences more than 4 weeks. Please submit an Application for Temporary Absence and supply evidence to support your request.

For more information, please refer to the Temporary Absence factsheet available from our office.

Visitors at your Property

Visitors can stay in Whitsunday Housing Company's properties, however there are conditions. You must tell Whitsunday Housing Company Ltd:

- Your visitors name/s
- The date their visit starts
- How long they intend to visit

We need this information in case of an emergency.

Your Visitor's Behaviour

Tenants are responsible for the behaviour of their household members and visitors.

You must ensure your household members and visitors do not disturb the reasonable peace, comfort and privacy of your neighbours. Whitsunday Housing Company may issue a Breach notice if anyone in the household or your visitors breach any of the terms of your tenancy agreement.

If your visitor stays longer than the indicated period, they are deemed as an unauthorised occupant and a breach may be issued to the tenant.

Whitsunday Housing Company will not tolerate any anti-social behaviour, deliberate or reckless property damage or illegal activities at the properties or in the common areas.

If you have any questions about visitors to your property, please do not hesitate to call Whitsunday Housing Company on 49467194.

Smoke Alarms and Fire Safety

WCHL ensures smoke alarms are provided in all our properties for the safety of our tenants, neighbours and the property. You must not remove a smoke alarm, remove the battery (other than to replace it) or do anything to reduce the effectiveness of the alarm (e.g. paint it).

According to smoke alarm legislation, tenants have the following responsibilities:

Tenant obligations	During the tenancy
Testing alarms	At least once every 12 months
Replacing batteries in alarms	When batteries are flat or nearly flat
Cleaning alarms	At least once every 12 months

When signing up for your property you will read and sign a Smoke Alarm Obligation form which outlines your responsibilities as a tenant.

If you are aware of a smoke alarm not working, other than because the battery is flat or almost flat, please advise us as soon as possible.

To ensure fire safety compliance, we will engage a contractor to complete a check of the property once every 12 months. You will receive an Entry notice (Form 9) confirming when this check will take place.

In this handbook you will find information regarding emergency procedures for fires and smoke alarms. Please ensure you read and understand the process.

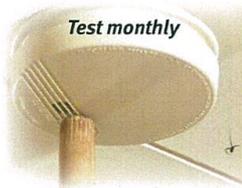
For more information regarding smoke alarms and fire safety please refer to www.fire.qld.gov.au

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this information, please contact us on 07 4946 7194.

SMOKE ALARM MAINTENANCE AND REPLACEMENT

Ver 01/2017

INFORMATION SHEET



For more information, relating to the maintenance responsibilities in rental properties, refer to the Queensland Fire and Emergency Services "[Smoke Alarms in Queensland](#)" brochure.

MAINTENANCE

How do I keep my smoke alarms working?

Smoke alarms can only save lives if they are well maintained and work properly.

Steps to remember:

- Read the manufacturer instructions.
- Once a month check the operation of the smoke alarm by pressing the test button. If you cannot reach the button easily, use a broom handle.
- Keep them clean. Dust and debris can interfere with their operation, so vacuum over and around your smoke alarm regularly.
- Replace removeable batteries, if applicable, annually.
- In most models when batteries are low the detector will sound a short 'BEEP' every minute or so. This is your reminder to replace the battery.
- Smoke alarms must never be painted.
- Failure to maintain your smoke alarm may lead to continued unwanted activations.
- If cooking smoke sets off the alarm, do not disable it. Turn on the range fan, open a window or wave a towel near the alarm until the alarm stops beeping. Or use the hush button (if fitted).
- If unwanted alarm activation persist when cooking, consider relocating the smoke alarm or change the range fan to exhaust externally.

REPLACEMENT

Why do I need to replace my smoke alarm?

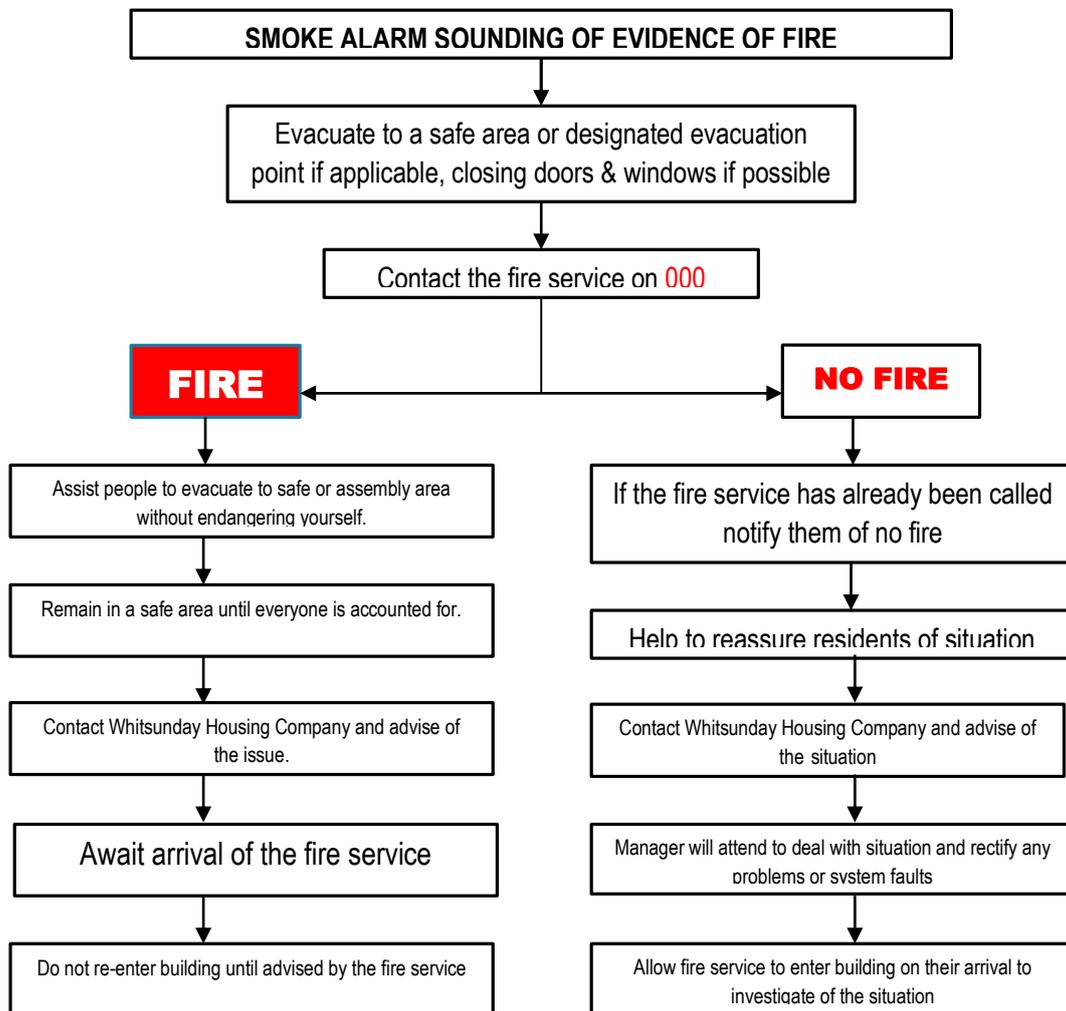
- After 10 years smoke alarms may malfunction and their efficiency compromised with accumulated dust, insects, airborne contaminants and corrosion of the electrical circuitry.
- They must be replaced after 10 years or if they fail to operate when tested.
- A smoke alarm constantly monitors the air 24 hours a day. At the end of 10 years, it has gone through millions of monitoring cycles. After so much use, components may become less reliable. This means that as the smoke alarm gets older, the potential of failure increases.
- Most smoke alarms have an expiry or replace by date stamped/printed on them.
- Contact the smoke alarm supplier for more detailed advice.

How do I dispose of a smoke alarm I've replaced?

Individual or small numbers of smoke alarms can be safely disposed of in household rubbish. Contact your local council for more information.



Emergency Procedure – Fire/Smoke Alarm



If you hear a smoke alarm sounding proceed immediately to the nearest **EXIT** and evacuate the building to a safe area or designated evacuation point, if applicable.

Contact the fire service **000**.

If you see **fire** or **smoke** and the alarms have not been activated, immediately warn other occupants by shouting **FIRE! FIRE! FIRE!**

If possible, attempt to close doors and windows behind you, but **ONLY** if it is safe to do so and **ONLY** if it does not slow the evacuation of other residents.

No one is to re-enter the building until an WHCL Manager or the Fire service advise it is safe to do so. Advise WHCL of the incident as soon as possible.

Emergency Procedure – Cyclone Preparation

A cyclone can strike at any time and with little warning. But there are some simple steps you can take to reduce the risk of damage and keep safe.

WHEN A CYCLONE WATCH IS ISSUED

- Check your yard for any loose material and tie down (or fill with water) all large, relatively light items such as boats and rubbish bins
- Fill the fuel tanks of your vehicles
- Check your emergency first aid kit is well stocked
- Fill containers with drinking water
- Ensure that everyone knows the strongest part of the building and what to do in the event of a cyclone warning or an evacuation
- Tune in to your local radio or TV for further information and warnings
- Make sure you have a supply of batteries, a radio, torches / lamps and non-perishable food.

WHEN A CYCLONE WARNING IS ISSUED

- If requested by local authorities, collect children from schools and day care and go home
- Park vehicles under solid shelter with hand brake on and in gear
- Move any outdoor furniture or other loose items into a secure location (house, garage or shed)
- Close any shutters, and board up or heavily tape all windows. Lock all doors
- Pack an evacuation kit full of warm clothes, medication and snacks (just in case), and put valuable items, important documents and memorabilia in a waterproof pack inside the evacuation kit. Large or heavy valuables should be wrapped up and placed inside a strong cupboard
- Remain indoors (with your pets), and stay tuned to your local radio or TV for further updates.

WHEN THE CYCLONE STRIKES

- Disconnect all electrical appliances. Listen to your battery radio for updates
- Stay in the strongest part of the building and well away from windows. Keep evacuation and emergency kits with you
- If the building starts to break up, protect yourself with mattresses, rugs or blankets under a strong table or bench, or hold on to a solid fixture
- Beware of the calm in the 'eye' of the storm. If the wind drops, don't assume that the cyclone is over. Violent winds will soon resume from another direction. Wait for the official 'all clear'
- If driving, stop (with handbrake on and car in gear) but well away from the sea, creeks or rivers, trees and power lines. Stay in the vehicle.

WHEN THERE IS A LOCAL EVACUATION

- If it is deemed necessary to evacuate, advice will be given on local radio or TV regarding safe routes and when to move

- Wear tough clothes for protection and take evacuation packs and emergency medical kits with you
- Lock all doors and turn off the power, gas and water. Don't forget your pets.
- ALWAYS follow police and State Emergency Services directions and advice.

Dangers of flood-damage property

DO NOT ENTER UNTIL DECLARED SAFE

If your home or yard has been flooded, do not enter the property until Emergency Services has declared that the area is safe to enter.

DANGERS OF FLOOD AFFECTED PROPERTY

Many dangers may be present in properties that have been flooded.

- Flood waters may contain raw sewage, which contains bacteria that can cause disease.
- Snakes, rats and other dangerous animals may be present.
- Electrical wiring and fittings may be damaged and unsafe.
- There may be structural damage that could make stairs, railings and floorboards unsafe. In some cases the roof or walls may be damaged and in danger of collapse.
- Gas lines may be damaged.
- Asbestos containing materials may have been damaged. Asbestos fibres can cause lung disease.
- The water from taps may be contaminated and unsafe to drink.
- The ground may be slippery or uneven, with risks of slips and falls.
- Debris such as broken glass, building materials, rubbish, nails could cause cuts or puncture wounds and pose a serious risk of infection.
- Mould grows in poorly ventilated spaces

Phone Whitsunday Housing Company Ltd on 49467194 to report damage to your property or if you believe your property is uninhabitable to discuss your housing options.

PRECAUTIONS ON ENTERING FLOOD-DAMAGED PROPERTY

- Wear sturdy shoes and clothes to protect from debris and vermin.
- Do not touch exposed electrical wires until you are sure they are not live. Make sure your energy supplier has either cut off the power to the property, or checked the electrical supply and installation is safe
- Keep the number of people entering your property to a minimum.
- Avoid taking children in or around flood-affected buildings, but if you do, supervise them at all times.
- Make sure the gas supply is checked for safety or isolated.
- Watch for loose floor boards, holes in the floor, protruding nails, and sagging ceiling areas that may be ready to fall.
- Do not smoke or use open flames as escaping gas may have collected in pockets of the building.
- If there is any chance of flood contamination of your drinking water, drink only boiled or bottled water until the normal water supply has been declared safe by health authorities.
- Check whether food affected by flooding needs to be thrown out. This includes perishable and non-perishable foods (i.e. cans or packaged foods) touched by floodwater or food stored in refrigerators and freezers affected by power outages.
- Seek medical attention for any injuries or wounds that have been exposed to floodwater.

Repairs and Maintenance

Maintenance/repair requests can be submitted by:

- Phoning our office on 07 4946 7194
- Emailing admin@whcl.com.au
- Lodging a website enquiry are www.whcl.com.au
- Completing a Maintenance Request Form at our office.

If your maintenance issue is of an urgent nature please contact us on the numbers below:

- 07 4946 7194 (**Anytime**, number is diverted to afterhours phone for **Emergencies** only)
- **For after hour emergencies see Important Contact Number's on last page.**

Our staff will contact you to discuss the problem and will let you know who will rectify the issue and a suitable response time in accordance with the Responsive Maintenance Priority Guide (Included in booklet).

If your property requires an emergency repair (e.g. major water leak, hot water system breakdown or dangerous electrical/safety fault) please contact our office so repairs can be arranged immediately.

Repair Costs

As the tenant, you are responsible for paying the full costs of repairing damage caused by you, a household member or a visitor you allowed onto the property. Over time there may be some deterioration due to the normal ageing process and use of the property. This is called "fair wear and tear" and you won't be charged for repairs and maintenance related to this.

We will not tolerate deliberate or reckless damage to our properties by a tenant, a member of your household or a visitor you allowed on the property. We will take action to end tenancies for deliberate or reckless property damage.

Damage to asbestos

Some building materials used in homes before 1990 may be hazardous when damaged. Materials used in wall and floor coverings, ceilings and roofing may contain asbestos. Any drilling, sanding, nailing etc. may cause particles to become airborne, creating a potential health hazard. If the material is not damaged, there is no danger to health.

If part of your home is damaged and you think it may contain asbestos, do not dust, sweep or vacuum debris. Contact Whitsunday Housing Company **07 4946 7194** and we will inspect the damage.

Broken Glass

Normally the cost of replacing broken glass is not considered fair wear and tear and is charged to you. If the breakage is your fault, you can either arrange the repairs yourself or contact us and we will arrange for the repairs and apply a debt to your account. If you call a qualified tradesperson to repair the damage – you need to pay for the repairs yourself and tell us about the breakage.

Vehicle damage to the property

If your home is damaged by a vehicle, try and get the:

- Name, address and license number of the driver
- Make model of the vehicle
- Registration number (number plate)
- Insurance details.

Report incident to the police and Whitsunday Housing Company.

What if I did not cause the damage?

If you don't know how the damage occurred, or if it was caused by a break-in, do not touch anything, contact your nearest police station, lodge a report and then contact us. You will need to give us the police report incident number. You will not be charged for the cost of the damage.

How do I pay for repairs?

We will send you a letter describing what repairs were done and the cost. The cost is recorded as a maintenance charge on your rental account. You will need to pay the charges off within 12 months or sooner.

Can I fix the damage myself?

If part of your home is damaged and you think it may contain asbestos, repairs must be done by a qualified tradesperson. If the property does not contain asbestos you may be able to do the repairs yourself or have your own tradesperson complete the work. If you do choose to use your own tradesperson or complete the repairs yourself, they must be completed to an acceptable standard. If the repairs are not to an acceptable standard, we will redo the repair work and charge you for the cost.

What happens if I do not fix the damage or inform Whitsunday Housing Company about it?

We inspect the property before you move in, periodically while you live there and when you move out. If we notice any damage while you live there we will arrange for repairs and charge the costs to you.

After you move out, if we notice damage not considered fair wear and tear, we will photograph the damage and record it. You have the option of repairing the damage before

handing in the keys or we will repair the damage after you move out and charge you the cost.

If you have debts for damage cause to a property during a previous tenancy, the debt must be repaid in full before we will provide you with future housing assistance.

Easy Maintenance

We all get stressed when things are not working properly. Before you call the office or in the event of an emergency, please check this guide first.

No Power:

- Have you contacted the power supply company and arranged for the connection when you moved in?
- Contact the power supply company; is there a fault in the street? Can you see if the neighbours have power?
- In a unit, check with your neighbours, it may be a body corporate issue and they need to be contacted
- Have you checked the fuse box? There may have been an overload & the safety switch has been activated and needs re-setting.
- Have you recently installed a new appliance? This may be overloading the system, when turned on in connection with other appliances.
- Turn off & disconnect all electrical appliances, re-set the safety switch (generally in the meter box), if the safety switch trips or blows again, contact our office immediately.
- If all is functioning with no appliances connected, it is likely that an appliance may be faulty. After re-setting the safety switch, plug in each appliance one by one. If the safety switch trips out during this process, then the appliance may be faulty.

Please note that if an electrician attends and the fault is located at your appliance, the call out fee will be charged. If the power outage is caused by the supplier, and an electrician attends at your request, you will be charged the call out fee.

No Hot Water

- Have you arranged the connection of your electricity supply?
- If a property has been vacant for some time, it can take up to 24 hours for the water to be heated to the correct temperature when moving in.
- Has the water to the property been turned off at the mains during the last 24 hours? Has the water been turned off at the unit by mistake? Have you checked the fuse box? Has the fuse been turned off by mistake? Have you checked the hot water system itself? There is generally an overflow pipe on the side of the unit, carefully pull the lever until a flow of water comes out of the pipe. There may be a small blockage and this may reset once cleared.

No Lights or Power

- Have you checked the fuse / meter box? If there has been an overload, the safety switch may need re-setting. Refer back to 'No Power' above to check your appliances.
- Have the globes / bulbs blown? Do you need to replace the globes / bulbs?

Stove Elements Not Working

- Have you checked the connections to ensure they are not loose or dirty? Sometimes simply removing the elements and cleaning them can fix the problem.
- Exhaust fan not working- have you checked the power to the unit? Have you cleaned the filters recently? Filters should be cleaned at least once per month with suitable commercial cleaning products. A buildup of grease in the filters can cause a fire if not regularly cleaned.

Kitchen / Bathroom Sink Blocked

- If the concern is that the water is taking a lot of time to drain from your sink: Have you tried using Draino? Have you tried cleaning and clearing old hairs / soap from the waste & u bend – unscrew the pipe under the sink (where possible) remove blockage and re-screw pipe. Pouring boiling water down the drain should clear excess.
- Have you removed old food from the kitchen waste and poured boiling water down the drain.
- Do not put / oil into the drain as these will clog pipes when cooled.
- If you are suffering from a major blockage with sewerage overflow – contact office urgently.

Dripping Taps

- Are taps being turned off correctly, especially by children

Sliding Doors

- Have you checked to ensure that there are no objects obstructing the track/s. The track should be kept clear of dirt and items.

Door Locks

- If doors are locking on their own, check if the button is stuck in the lock position. Some lock sets have a dent on the button, which can be pushed in and turned anti-clockwise to release the button.

Ceiling Fans

- Makes funny noise – generally the bearing causes this noise when it is out of balance. Make sure that you do not hang anything off a fan or the blades. Ensure the blades are cleaned on a regular basis to avoid dust building up and getting in to the bearings.
- Only works on one or two speeds or there is a burning smell? Turn off & keep turned off immediately and advise the office.

TV Reception

- Have you checked the aerial is plugged in? Is the plug on your lead in good condition and not faulty? Do you have an external aerial which may have moved in strong winds? Do you have a booster attached at the aerial either inside or outside?

Broken Glass / Windows

- How did this occur? If this was an accident, then generally there may be insurance to cover the cost, however the excess may be requested for payment.
- Is this a safety issue, will someone be hurt or is this a security problem if left? If so contact office immediately.

Modifications/Alterations to the Property

If you would like to make any modifications or alterations to the property or garden please submit a request in writing to our office. This includes painting, creating gardens, hanging picture hooks, installing air conditioners, changing fittings etc.

An application for alterations form is available from our office upon request. Your application will be reviewed and you will receive a response in writing.

Timeframes for repairs

Immediate 1 hour	Urgent 3 hours	Priority Same Day	Normal 1 Week	Non – Urgent 2 weeks
Gas leaks	No power	Partially blocked sewerage (not overflowing)	Slow dripping taps	External repaints
Fire	Serious storm damage	Toilet not working (not overflowing)	Stove partially faulty	Internal repaints
Live exposed wiring	Burst external water pipe	Faulty external door locks	Water hammer	Fence repairs
Burst internal water pipe	Blocked sewerage overflowing	Unsecure external doors and windows	External entry doors jamming	Fence replacement
	Structural damage endangering occupants	Fast dripping taps	Tree lopping/removal of unsafe trees	Ceiling fan repairs/installation
	Full stove not working	No hot water	Leaking gutters and downpipes	Partially loose joinery
	Smoke alarms not working	No power to multiple power points	Faulty single light or power outlet	Cupboard doors not closing
	Toilet not working and/or overflowing	No power to multiple lights	Meter box replacement	Internal doors jamming
		Communal area lights not working	Faulty internal door locks	Tree lopping
		Unsecured yard fence for small children	Uneven, unsafe, irregular pathway/driveway	Site drainage
				Lawn and garden maintenance
				Mandatory, statutory & other essential maintenance services as required

Ending your Tenancy

Notifying WHCL

If you decide to vacate your property please notify our office as soon as you are able to. Your Property Manager will post you a vacate pack which will outline the rent payable up to your vacating date and other relevant information/forms.

Cleaning and repairs

Apart from normal wear and tear, the property needs to be left in the same condition as when you moved in.

Please ensure the property is properly cleaned, all items and rubbish removed and the lawns/gardens left neat and tidy. If the property is not returned in an acceptable standard we will engage contractors to complete any cleaning and/or repairs required. You will be required to pay for any costs associated.

Carpets need to be professionally cleaned and a receipt produced to our office with the return of the keys.

If pets have been kept on the premises at any time, then the property must be professionally pest controlled for fleas inside and out and a receipt produced to our office.

For more information please refer to the Cleaning Guide for Vacating Tenants included in your vacate pack.

Exit condition report

An exit condition report (Form14a) will be completed to show the condition of the property when you leave. This will be compared with the entry condition report. You may request a vacation inspection with your Property Manager where this can be completed together and any issues can be addressed at the time.

Returning keys and documents

Once the property has been cleaned please return the keys to our office, including any sets given to other household members. Please note, rent will continue to be charged up until the day you return the keys to us.

When finalising your tenancy we request you complete a Key return Form. This form provides us with valuable information to ensure we obtain your forwarding address and bank account details (if refund is applicable).

Bond

If your property is returned in an acceptable standard and you have no outstanding debts, we will apply to the Residential Tenancies Authority to have your bond refunded.

Complaints

Definition

Complaints are made when you are not satisfied with the quality and standard of service you have received from Whitsunday Housing Company Ltd. This can include service received from a staff member or contractor.

Lodging a complaint

Complaints can be lodged by:

In person	Suite 4/121 Shute Harbour Road, Cannonvale QLD 4802
Post	PO BOX 1084, Cannonvale QLD 4802
Phone	07 4946 7194
Fax	07 4946 7010
Email	admin@whcl.com.au
Website	www.whcl.com.au

Handling of complaints

Complainants have the right to remain anonymous although we encourage contact details to be provided for the purpose of a more satisfactory resolution process.

We are dedicated to investigating and resolving customers concerns. When you raise a complaint or concern with us, your case will be assigned to a particular person who will deal with your matter from start to finish (unless escalation of the issue is required). The person assigned to you will be independent to the area of the complaint.

We will attempt to resolve the complaint in the first instance, however if this is not possible we will contact you within five working days of receiving the complaint to discuss the issue. While we attempt to resolve matters within 18 working days, different issues may mean lengthier resolution period.

After we have reviewed your complaint, you will be notified of our decision or outcome in relation to your complaint in writing.

If you are not completely satisfied with the outcome of the investigation or our determination of your complaint, you may wish to appeal the decision and take the matter to a higher level of our organisation.

Tenant Disputes

Definition

A tenant dispute involve issues where the peace, comfort or privacy is disturbed for other tenants, neighbours or community members. This may include:

- Excessive noise
- Intimidation or harassment
- Aggressive and threatening language or behavior
- Vandalism
- Nuisance caused by vehicles such as where they are parked
- Nuisance caused by pets

Handling a tenant dispute

It is a condition of tenancy with Whitsunday Housing Company that tenants do not interfere with the peace, comfort or privacy of a neighbour. If you believe the problem relates to a breach of the tenancy agreement please contact your Property Manager to discuss.

If we feel the issue is a personal dispute between you and your neighbour, we may not take any further action and encourage you discuss your concerns with your neighbour, if possible.

If you are unable to resolve the matter, the Dispute Resolution Service may be able to provide a free mediation service to assist you and your neighbour to settle the dispute amicably. Further information regarding mediation is available from the Department of Justice website;

<https://www.qld.gov.au/law/legal-mediation-and-justice-of-the-peace/settling-disputes-out-of-court/mediation>

If the problem involves criminal activity we are unable to take direct action. In this circumstance you can report the activity anonymously to Crime Stoppers on 1800 333 000.

If at any time you feel threatened please contact emergency services on '000' in the first instance.

Appealing a decision

As a tenant, you can appeal a decision made by us in relation to your tenancy. This can be done by phone, email, post or in person.

The appeal process reviews all relevant information and looks at how the original decision was made. To ensure this process is fair and transparent, the appeal will be reviewed by a manager who has not had any involvement in the original decision.

Once the appeal has been reviewed, you will be notified of the outcome in writing.

Checklist for Moving

If you are currently renting, you must give notice to your current lessor (landlord) or agent.

You should have inspected the property prior to acceptance and you will have been given a copy of the lease and all special terms & conditions required for your property and the RTA Form 17a – Information for renting in QLD. You should carefully read these documents to see what your rights and responsibilities are in this matter. Alternatively you can contact the Residential Tenancies Authority on 1300 366 311.

Tell people you have moved:

Centrelink		Insurance Company	
Bank's		Post Office	
Child Care		Family Day care	
RACQ		Credit Union	
Doctor		Dentist	
School		Department of Transport	
Superannuation fund		Health Services	
Electricity		Telephone	
Gas		Health Insurance	
Family		Friends	
Support Services		Other Service Providers	
Support Services		Other Service Providers	
Previous Agent/Lessor		_____	
_____		_____	
_____		_____	

Important Contact Numbers

Emergency/Medical	
Emergency Services – Police, Fire, Ambulance	000
SES	13 25 00
Proserpine Hospital	(07) 4813 9400
Bowen Hospital	(07) 4786 8222
Utilities	
Ergon Energy - Connections	13 10 46
Ergon Energy – Faults	13 22 96
Telstra	1800 670 017
Hotlines and other organisations	
Beyond Blue	1300 224 636
Centacare – Bowen	(07) 4786 4158
Child Abuse Prevention Service	1800 688 009
Crime Stoppers	1800 333 000
Department of Housing and Public Works – Mackay	(07) 4862 9500
Domestic Violence Hotline	1800 811 811
Lifeline	13 11 14
Poisons Information	13 11 26
Police Link (non-urgent)	13 14 44
Tenancy Advice/information	
Residential Tenancies Authority	1300 366 311
QSTARS (Qld State-wide Tenants Advice & Referral Service)	1300 744 263
Council	
Whitsunday Council – Proserpine	(07) 4945 0200
Whitsunday Council – Bowen	(07) 4761 3600
Emergency / After Hours Trades People	
CES Electrical – (Cannonvale & Proserpine Area's)	0449 123 915
Rick Ashton Electrical – (Bowen Area)	0401 888 042
Whitsunday Plumbing – (Cannonvale & Proserpine Area's)	0417 149 990
Jeff Day Plumbing – (Bowen Area)	0434 718 751
Whitsunday Lawn mowing and Maintenance	0478 914 179
Girudala – (General Maintenance Bowen Area)	(07) 4786 1000
North Queensland Glass and Glazing – (All Areas)	0410 511 823
D & B Locksmiths – (All Areas)	0419 434 900

If you have any questions or concerns regarding your tenancy, please feel free to contact us on:

Street Address: Suite 4/121 Shute Harbour Road, Cannonvale QLD 4802
Postal: PO BOX 1084, Cannonvale QLD 4802
Phone: 07 4946 7194
Fax: 07 4946 7010
Email: admin@whcl.com.au
Website: www.whcl.com.au