



## Franklands Village Housing Association

### Self-Assessment Form

This self-assessment form should be completed by the complaints officer and discussed at the landlord's governing body annually. Evidence should be included to support all statements with additional commentary, as necessary. Explanations must also be provided where a mandatory 'must' requirement is not met to set out the rationale for the alternative approach adopted and why this delivers a better outcome.

#### Section 1 - Definition of a complaint

##### Mandatory 'must' requirements

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary, and any explanations
1.2	A complaint must be defined as: <i>'an expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, actions, or lack of action by the organisation, its own staff, or those acting on its behalf, affecting an individual resident or group of residents.'</i>	Yes	This is clearly detailed in our Complaints Policy
1.3	The resident does not have to use the word 'complaint' for it to be treated as such. A complaint that is submitted via a third party or representative must still be handled in line with the landlord's complaints policy.	Yes	Detailed in FVHA Complaints Handling Procedure.
1.6	If further enquiries are needed to resolve the matter, or if the resident requests it, the issue must be logged as a complaint.	Yes	All complaints are logged.
1.7	A landlord must accept a complaint unless there is a valid reason not to do so.	Yes	Detailed of our Complaints Handling Procedure.

1.8	A complaints policy must clearly set out the circumstances in which a matter will not be considered, and these circumstances should be fair and reasonable to residents.	Yes	Detailed in point of our Complaints Handling Procedure.
1.9	If a landlord decides not to accept a complaint, a detailed explanation must be provided to the resident setting out the reasons why the matter is not suitable for the complaints process and the right to take that decision to the Ombudsman.	Yes	Detailed in Complaints Handling Procedure.

### Best practice 'should' requirements

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary, and any explanations
1.4	Landlords should recognise the difference between a <b>service request</b> , where a resident may be unhappy with a <b>situation</b> that they wish to have rectified, and a <b>complaint</b> about the <b>service</b> they have/have not received.	Yes	Detailed in of our Complaints Procedure
1.5	Survey feedback may not necessarily need to be treated as a complaint, though, where possible, the person completing the survey should be made aware of how they can pursue their dissatisfaction as a complaint if they wish to.	Yes	All tenants are asked if they would like any feedback that they give to FVHA raised as a complaint, if suitable to do so.

## Section 2 - Accessibility and awareness

### Mandatory 'must' requirements

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary, and any explanations
2.1	Landlords must make it easy for residents to complain by providing different channels through which residents can make a complaint such as in person, over the telephone, in writing, by email and digitally. While the Ombudsman recognises that it may not be feasible for a landlord to use all of the potential channels, there must be more than one route of access into the complaints system.	Yes	FVHA details how complaints can be made in our Complaints Procedure and available on our website. This is in line with the Housing Ombudsman complaint handling code.
2.3	Landlords must make their complaint policy available in a clear and accessible format for all residents. This will detail the number of stages involved, what will happen at each stage and the timeframes for responding.	Yes	Detailed in our Complaints Procedure
2.4	Landlord websites, if they exist, must include information on how to raise a complaint. The complaints policy and process must be easy to find on the website.	Yes	Website has a link to our Making A Complaint Policy & Procedure which details how tenants can make a complaint via email, letter or on the phone.
2.5	Landlords must comply with the Equality Act 2010 and may need to adapt normal policies, procedures, or processes to accommodate an individual's needs. Landlords must satisfy themselves that their policy sets out how they will respond to reasonable adjustments requests in line with the Equality Act and that complaints handlers have had appropriate training to deal with such requests.	Yes	FVHA complies with the Equality Act 2010.
2.6	Landlords must publicise the complaints policy and process, the Complaint Handling Code and the Housing Ombudsman Scheme in leaflets, posters, newsletters, online and as part of regular correspondence with residents.	Yes	FVHA has a Making A Complaint Policy & Procedure which details these points. How to make a complaint is also detailed on our website.

<b>2.7</b>	Landlords must provide residents with contact information for the Ombudsman as part of its regular correspondence with residents.	Yes	The Housing Ombudsman details are in FVHA Complaints Procedure. We will also include the Housing Ombudsman details in our quarterly newsletters.
<b>2.8</b>	Landlords must provide early advice to residents regarding their right to access the Housing Ombudsman Service throughout their complaint, not only when the landlord's complaints process is exhausted.	Yes	This is detailed in our Complaints Policy & Procedure that is available on our website and given to all tenants who raise a complaint.

### Best practice 'should' requirements

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary, and any explanations
<b>2.2</b>	Where a landlord has set up channels to communicate with its residents via social media, then it should expect to receive complaints via those channels. Policies should contain details of the steps that will be taken when a complaint is received via social media and how confidentiality and privacy will be maintained.	Yes	FVHA do not communicate with our tenants through social media, as such we do not receive complaints in this way.

## Section 3 - Complaint handling personnel

### Mandatory 'must' requirements

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary, and any explanations
<b>3.1</b>	Landlords must have a person or team assigned to take responsibility for complaint handling to ensure complaints receive the necessary attention, and that these are reported to the governing body. This Code will refer to that person or team as the "complaints officer."	Yes	FVHA has a nominated complaint handler detailed of FVHA Complaints Policy & Procedure. Complaints are available upon request to the governing body.
<b>3.2</b>	...the complaint handler appointed must have appropriate complaint handling skills and no conflicts of interest.	Yes	The complaints handler is trained in complaint handling and is separate from the rest of the business.

### Best practice 'should' requirements

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary, and any explanations
3.3	<p>Complaint handlers should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• be able to act sensitively and fairly</li> <li>• be trained to handle complaints and deal with distressed and upset residents</li> <li>• have access to staff at all levels to facilitate quick resolution of complaints</li> <li>• have the authority and autonomy to act to resolve disputes quickly and fairly.</li> </ul>	Yes	Our complaints handlers are trained, act sensitively and have access to all staff members to resolve a complaint as early as possible.

### Section 4 - Complaint handling principles

#### Mandatory 'must' requirements

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary, and any explanations
4.1	<p>Any decision to try and resolve a concern must be taken in agreement with the resident and a landlord's audit trail/records should be able to demonstrate this. Landlords must ensure that efforts to resolve a resident's concerns do not obstruct access to the complaints procedure or result in any unreasonable delay. It is not appropriate to have extra named stages (such as 'stage 0' or 'pre-complaint stage') as this causes unnecessary confusion for residents. When a complaint is made, it must be acknowledged and logged at stage one of the complaints procedure <b>within five days of receipt.</b></p>	Yes	<p>FVHA operate a 3-stage process (1-3) for complaints.</p> <p>All complaints are logged and acknowledged within 5 days of receipt</p>

<b>4.2</b>	Within the complaint acknowledgement, landlords must set out their understanding of the complaint and the outcomes the resident is seeking. If any aspect of the complaint is unclear, the resident must be asked for clarification and the full definition agreed between both parties.	Yes	FVHA acknowledgment also states who will be investigating the complaint made at stage 1.
<b>4.6</b>	A complaint investigation must be conducted in an impartial manner.	Yes	Stage 1 of the process is carried out by FVHA Housing Manager.
<b>4.7</b>	The complaint handler must: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• deal with complaints on their merits</li> <li>• act independently and have an open mind</li> <li>• take measures to address any actual or perceived conflict of interest</li> <li>• consider all information and evidence carefully</li> <li>• keep the complaint confidential as far as possible, with information only disclosed if necessary to properly investigate the matter.</li> </ul>	Yes	FVHA complies with all points noted.
<b>4.11</b>	Landlords must adhere to any reasonable arrangements agreed with residents in terms of frequency and method of communication	Yes	This is determined at stage 1 of the complaints process.
<b>4.12</b>	The resident, and if applicable any staff member who is the subject of the complaint, must also be given a fair chance to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• set out their position</li> <li>• comment on any adverse findings before a final decision is made.</li> </ul>	Yes	This forms part of the stage 1 “fact finding” and response process.
<b>4.13</b>	A landlord must include in its complaints policy its timescales for a resident to request escalation of a complaint	Yes	Detailed in FVHA Complaints Policy & Procedure This is also stated in each stage of the response letters.
<b>4.14</b>	A landlord must not unreasonably refuse to escalate a complaint through all stages of the complaints	Yes	Detailed in FVHA Complaints Policy & Procedure

	procedure and must have clear and valid reasons for taking that course of action. Reasons for declining to escalate a complaint must be clearly set out in a landlord's complaints policy and must be the same as the reasons for not accepting a complaint.		
<b>4.15</b>	A full record must be kept of the complaint, any review, and the outcomes at each stage. This must include the original complaint and the date received, all correspondence with the resident, correspondence with other parties and any reports or surveys prepared.	Yes	All steps of the complaint are logged on the FVHA complaints log sheet. Any additional notes are logged on our housing management system.
<b>4.18</b>	Landlords must have policies and procedures in place for managing unacceptable behaviour from residents and/or their representatives when pursuing a complaint.	Yes	

### Best practice 'should' requirements

<b>Code section</b>	<b>Code requirement</b>	<b>Comply: Yes/No</b>	<b>Evidence, commentary, and any explanations</b>
<b>4.3</b>	Landlords should manage residents' expectations from the outset, being clear where a desired outcome is unreasonable or unrealistic	Yes	This will form part of the response from initial logging of the complaint, all the way through each stage of the complaint response.
<b>4.4</b>	A complaint should be resolved at the earliest possible opportunity, having assessed what evidence is needed to fully consider the issues, what outcome would resolve the matter for the resident and whether there are any urgent actions required.	Yes	This is considered at the first point and within the first stage of the complaint.
<b>4.5</b>	Landlords should give residents the opportunity to have a representative deal with their complaint on their behalf, and to be represented or accompanied at any meeting with the landlord where this is reasonable.	Yes	Detailed in FVHA Complaints Policy & Procedure.
<b>4.8</b>	Where a key issue of a complaint relates to the parties' legal obligations landlords should clearly set out their understanding of the obligations of both parties.	Yes	This would be detailed in the Stage 1 response.

4.9	Communication with the resident should not generally identify individual members of staff or contractors.	Yes	Individual names are removed wherever possible when responding to complaints.
4.10	Landlords should keep residents regularly updated about the progress of the investigation.	Yes	The FVHA Complaints Policy & Procedure clearly details who and when responses will be given. This is also detailed in any stage response letter.
4.16	Landlords should seek feedback from residents in relation to the landlord's complaint handling as part of the drive to encourage a positive complaint and learning culture.	Yes	FVHA asks for feedback on all occasions when engaging with our tenants so that we can learn from the complaint..
4.17	Landlords should recognise the impact that being complained about can have on future service delivery. Landlords should ensure that staff are supported and engaged in the complaints process, including the learning that can be gained	Yes	Complaints are discussed by team members with senior managers and support is offered wherever required.
4.19	Any restrictions placed on a resident's contact due to unacceptable behaviour should be appropriate to their needs and should demonstrate regard for the provisions of the Equality Act 2010.	Yes	An Equality & Diversity justification form is completed in any case where unacceptable behaviour is considered.

## Section 5 - Complaint stages

### Mandatory 'must' requirements

#### Stage 1

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary, and any explanations
5.1	Landlords must respond to the complaint <b><u>within 10 working days</u></b> of the complaint being logged. Exceptionally, landlords may provide an explanation to the resident containing a clear timeframe for when the response will be received. This should not exceed a further 10 days without good reason.	Yes	All stages of a complaint are detailed with FVHA Complaints Policy & Procedure.
5.5	A complaint response must be sent to the resident when the answer to the complaint is known, not when the outstanding actions required to address the issue, are completed. Outstanding actions must still be tracked and actioned expeditiously with regular updates provided to the resident.	Yes	Any actions required will be logged on the complaints spread sheet and tenants informed.



<b>5.6</b>	Landlords must address all points raised in the complaint and provide clear reasons for any decisions, referencing the relevant policy, law, and good practice where appropriate.	Yes	Detailed explanations are given as part of the response stages.
<b>5.8</b>	Landlords must confirm the following in writing to the resident at the completion of stage one in clear, plain language: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the complaint stage</li> <li>• the decision on the complaint</li> <li>• the reasons for any decisions made</li> <li>• the details of any remedy offered to put things right</li> <li>• details of any outstanding actions</li> <li>• details of how to escalate the matter to stage two if the resident is not satisfied with the answer</li> </ul>	Yes	All point listed are detailed in the complaints response letter(s).

## Stage 2

<b>Code section</b>	<b>Code requirement</b>	<b>Comply: Yes/No</b>	<b>Evidence, commentary, and any explanations</b>
<b>5.9</b>	If all or part of the complaint is not resolved to the resident's satisfaction at stage one it must be progressed to stage two of the landlord's procedure, unless an exclusion ground now applies. In instances where a landlord declines to escalate a complaint it must clearly communicate in writing its reasons for not escalating as well as the resident's right to approach the Ombudsman about its decision.	Yes	All complaints (unless a particular exclusion applies) are offered to be moved to stage 2 of the complaints process and reviewed CEO
<b>5.10</b>	On receipt of the escalation request, landlords must set out their understanding of issues outstanding and the outcomes the resident is seeking. If any aspect of the complaint is unclear, the resident must be asked for clarification and the full definition agreed between both parties.	Yes	FVHA also offer a confidential interview with the complainant at their home or in the office to ensure all parts of the complaint are captured.
<b>5.11</b>	Landlords must only escalate a complaint to stage two once it has completed stage one and at the request of the resident.	Yes	In the stage 1 complaint response letter there is the option to raise the complaint to stage 2 if the complainant is not satisfied with the response.

5.12	The person considering the complaint at stage two, must not be the same person that considered the complaint at stage one.	Yes	In FVHA procedure at stage 2 complaint is reviewed and responded to by the CEO
5.13	Landlords must respond to the stage two complaint <b><u>within 20 working days</u></b> of the complaint being escalated. Exceptionally, landlords may provide an explanation to the resident containing a clear timeframe for when the response will be received. This should not exceed a further 10 days without good reason.	Yes	As detailed within FVHA Complaints Policy & Procedure
5.16	Landlords must confirm the following in writing to the resident at the completion of stage two in clear, plain language: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the complaint stage</li> <li>• the complaint definition</li> <li>• the decision on the complaint</li> <li>• the reasons for any decisions made</li> <li>• the details of any remedy offered to put things right</li> <li>• details of any outstanding actions</li> </ul> <b>and</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• if the landlord has a third stage, details of how to escalate the matter to stage three</li> <li>• if this was the final stage, details of how to escalate the matter to the Housing Ombudsman Service if the resident remains dissatisfied.</li> </ul>	Yes	All points are clearly detailed in the stage 2 response letter. Tenants then have an option to raise the complaint to stage 3 if they are still not satisfied with the response. FVHA third stage of the Complaints Policy & Procedure is reviewed Appeals and Complaints Sub Committee

### Stage 3

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary, and any explanations
5.17	Two stage landlord complaint procedures are ideal. This ensures that the complaint process is not unduly long. If landlords strongly believe a third stage is necessary, they must set out their reasons for this as part of their self-assessment. A process with more than three stages is not acceptable under any circumstances.	Yes	FVHA operate a 3 stage Complaints Procedure. This is to ensure the complaint has been reviewed throughout the organisation and the best outcome is achieved for the tenant.

5.20	<p>Landlords must confirm the following in writing to the resident at the completion of stage three in clear, plain language:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the complaint stage</li> <li>• the complaint definition</li> <li>• the decision on the complaint</li> <li>• the reasons for any decisions made</li> <li>• the details of any remedy offered to put things right</li> <li>• details of any outstanding actions</li> <li>• details of how to escalate the matter to the Housing Ombudsman Service if the resident remains dissatisfied</li> </ul>	Yes	<p>All points are clearly detailed in the stage 3 response letter. Tenants then have an option to raise the complaint with the Housing Ombudsman if they are still not satisfied that the complaint has been resolved.</p> <p>The Housing Ombudsman details are included in the stage 3 response letter.</p>
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### Best practice 'should' requirements

#### Stage 1

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary, and any explanations
5.2	If an extension beyond 20 working days is required to enable the landlord to respond to the complaint fully, this should be agreed by both parties.	Yes	This will be detailed in any response letter.
5.3	Where agreement over an extension period cannot be reached, landlords should provide the Housing Ombudsman's contact details so the resident can challenge the landlord's plan for responding and/or the proposed timeliness of a landlord's response.	Yes	The Housing Ombudsman details will be provided to the complainant if they are unhappy with any extension of time requested.
5.4	Where the problem is a recurring issue, the landlord should consider any older reports as part of the background to the complaint if this will help to resolve the issue for the resident.	Yes	Any previous history and responses will be considered when reviewing the complaint.
5.7	Where residents raise additional complaints during the investigation, these should be incorporated into the stage one response if they are relevant and the stage one response has not been issued. Where the stage one response has been issued, or it would unreasonably delay the response, the complaint should be logged as a new complaint.	Yes	Consideration is given to any additional complaints and responded to within the current complaint's procedure wherever suitable.

## Stage 2

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary, and any explanations
5.14	If an extension beyond 10 working days is required to enable the landlord to respond to the complaint fully, this should be agreed by both parties.	Yes	Any extension of time requirements will be put in writing to the complainant and agreement to the extension confirmed by both parties.
5.15	Where agreement over an extension period cannot be reached, landlords should provide the Housing Ombudsman's contact details so the resident can challenge the landlord's plan for responding and/or the proposed timeliness of a landlord's response	Yes	The Housing Ombudsman details will be provided to the complainant if they are unhappy with any extension of time requested.

## Stage 3

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary, and any explanations
5.18	Complaints should only go to a third stage if the resident has actively requested a third stage review of their complaint. Where a third stage is in place and has been requested, landlords must respond to the stage three complaint <b>within 20 working days</b> of the complaint being escalated. Additional time will only be justified if related to convening a panel. An explanation and a date for when the stage three response will be received should be provided to the resident.	Yes	Complaints only proceed to stage 3 if requested by the complainant. Timescales for response are detailed in FVHA Complaints Policy & Procedure. If additional time is required, this is confirmed in writing detailing why the additional time is required.
5.19	Where agreement over an extension period cannot be reached, landlords should provide the Housing Ombudsman's contact details so the resident can challenge the landlord's plan for responding and/or the proposed timeliness of a landlord's response.	Yes	The Housing Ombudsman details are provided to the complainant.

## Section 6 - Putting things right

### Mandatory 'must' requirements

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary, and any explanations
6.1	Effective dispute resolution requires a process designed to resolve complaints. Where something has gone wrong a landlord must acknowledge this and set out the actions it has already taken, or intends to take, to put things right.	Yes	This is detailed in our complaint's response letters
6.2	Any remedy offered must reflect the extent of any service failures and the level of detriment caused to the resident as a result. A landlord must carefully manage the expectations of residents and not promise anything that cannot be delivered or would cause unfairness to other residents.	Yes	This is detailed in our complaint's response letters
6.5	The remedy offer must clearly set out what will happen and by when, in agreement with the resident where appropriate. Any remedy proposed must be followed through to completion.	Yes	This is detailed in our complaint's response letters
6.6	In awarding compensation, a landlord must consider whether any statutory payments are due, if any quantifiable losses have been incurred, the time and trouble a resident has been put to as well as any distress and inconvenience caused.	Yes	This is detailed in our complaint's response letters

### Best practice 'should' requirements

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary, and any explanations
6.3	Landlords should look beyond the circumstances of the individual complaint and consider whether anything needs to be 'put right' in terms of process or systems to the benefit of all residents.	Yes	All complaints are reviewed by senior managers and discussed with team members to determine if any changes to systems or processes are required.
6.7	In some cases, a resident may have a legal entitlement to redress. The landlord should still offer a resolution where possible, obtaining legal advice as to how any offer of resolution should be worded.	Yes	Staff members have access to legal support but would discuss any such situations with senior manager first.

## Section 7 - Continuous learning and improvement

### Mandatory 'must' requirements

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary, and any explanations
7.2	Accountability and transparency are integral to a positive complaint handling culture. Landlords must report back on wider learning and improvements from complaints in their annual report and more frequently to their residents, staff, and scrutiny panels.	Yes	Complaints reviews will be carried out by our senior staff members and Tenant Board Member and any findings acted upon. Complaints are referred to in our annual report.

### Best practice 'should' requirements

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary, and any explanations
7.3	A member of the governing body should be appointed to have lead responsibility for complaints to support a positive complaint handling culture. This role will be responsible for ensuring the governing body receives regular information on complaints that provides insight to the governing body on the landlord's complaint handling performance.	Yes	Number & nature of complaints received by FVHA are available to the governing body if / when they require them.
7.4	As a minimum, governing bodies should receive: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regular updates on the volume, categories, and outcome of complaints, alongside complaint handling performance including compliance with the Ombudsman's orders</li> <li>Regular reviews of issues and trends arising from complaint handling,</li> <li>The annual performance report produced by the Ombudsman, where applicable</li> <li>Individual complaint outcomes where necessary, including where the Ombudsman made findings of severe maladministration or referrals to regulatory bodies. The implementation of management responses should be tracked to ensure they are delivered to agreed timescales. The annual self-assessment against the Complaint Handling Code for scrutiny and challenge.</li> </ul>	Yes	Number & nature of complaints received by FVHA are available to the governing body if / when they require them.

7.5	Any themes or trends should be assessed by senior management to identify potential systemic issues, serious risks or policies and procedures that require revision. They should also be used to inform staff and contractor training.	Yes	All complaints are reviewed by senior management with staff members to determine if there are any cases from which we can learn. Any actions required following those reviews will be acted on as soon as possible.
7.6	Landlords should have a standard objective in relation to complaint handling for all employees that reflects the need to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• have a collaborative and co-operative approach towards resolving complaints, working with colleagues across teams and departments</li> <li>• take collective responsibility for any shortfalls identified through complaints rather than blaming others</li> <li>• act within the Professional Standards for engaging with complaints as set by the Chartered Institute of Housing.</li> </ul>	Yes	All complaints are reviewed by senior management with staff members to determine if there are any cases from which we can learn. Any actions required following those reviews will be acted on as soon as possible.

## Section 8 - Self-assessment and compliance

### Mandatory 'must' requirements

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary, and any explanations
8.1	Landlords must carry out an annual self-assessment against the Code to ensure their complaint handling remains in line with its requirements.	Yes	Self-assessment carried out annually.
8.2	Landlords must also carry out a self-assessment following a significant restructure and/or change in procedures.	Yes	As and when a restructure should happen.

<p><b>8.3</b></p>	<p>Following each self-assessment, a landlord must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• report the outcome of their self-assessment to their governing body. In the case of local authorities, self-assessment outcomes should be reported to elected members</li> <li>• publish the outcome of their assessment on their website if they have one, or otherwise make accessible to residents</li> <li>• include the self-assessment in their annual report section on complaints handling performance</li> </ul>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>Report available for the governing body if / when the request it.</p> <p>Self-assessment form will be published on our website and form part of our annual report.</p>
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