

Appendix A: Self-assessment form

This self-assessment form should be completed by the complaints officer, and it must be reviewed and approved by the landlord's governing body at least annually.

Once approved, landlords must publish the self-assessment as part of the annual complaints performance and service improvement report on their website. The governing body's response to the report must be published alongside this.

Landlords are required to complete the self-assessment in full and support all statements with evidence, with additional commentary as necessary.

We recognise that there may be a small number of circumstances where landlords are unable to meet the requirements, for example, if they do not have a website. In these circumstances, we expect landlords to deliver the intentions of the Code in an alternative way, for example by publishing information in a public area so that it is easily accessible.

Section 1: Definition of a complaint

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
1.2	<p>A complaint must be defined as:</p> <p><i>'an expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, actions or lack of action by the landlord, its own staff, or those acting on its behalf, affecting a resident or group of residents.'</i></p>	Yes	<p>FWH Complaints Policy (Under point 3.1)</p>	<p>The definition in the Complaints Policy reads: "A complaint is defined as 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."</p>
1.3	<p>A resident does not have to use the word 'complaint' for it to be treated as such. Whenever a resident expresses dissatisfaction landlords must give them the choice to make complaint. A complaint that is submitted via a third party or representative must be handled in line with the landlord's complaints policy.</p>	Yes	<p>FWH Complaints Policy (Under point 3.1)</p>	<p>Residents do not have to use the word complaint for it to be treated as one. As per the policy and definition above, a complaint could be made about the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delay in taking action without good reason • Failure to provide a service • Mistakes in the way a decision was taken • Not following the law or the Council's own rules • Broken promises • Giving incorrect or misleading information

				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bias or discrimination • Rude, unhelpful or inappropriate behaviour by staff • Poor communication <p>Complaint training provided to staff also reiterates that residents do not have to use the word 'complaint' for it to be treated as such.</p>
1.4	<p>Landlords must recognise the difference between a service request and a complaint. This must be set out in their complaints policy. A service request is a request from a resident to the landlord requiring action to be taken to put something right. Service requests are not complaints, but must be recorded, monitored and reviewed regularly.</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p><u>FWH Complaints Policy</u> (Under point 3.1)</p>	<p>FWH recognises the difference between a complaint and a service request. It mentions in its Complaints Policy, "Some issues do not fall within the category of a complaint and are more appropriately dealt with as a service request. This can include instances where a customer is 'complaining' about a problem that FWH has not created, such as neighbour noise nuisance. The same can be true for a 'complaint' received to report a repair request. These are requests to FWH for appropriate action to be taken."</p>

1.5	A complaint must be raised when the resident expresses dissatisfaction with the response to their service request, even if the handling of the service request remains ongoing. Landlords must not stop their efforts to address the service request if the resident complains.	Yes	<u>FWH Complaints Policy</u> (Under point 3.1)	FWH will log a complaint where the complainant is not happy with the way in which their service request/s has/have been handled. FWH will continue to take action on the requests raised whilst the complaint is being investigated.
1.6	An expression of dissatisfaction with services made through a survey is not defined as a complaint, though wherever possible, the person completing the survey should be made aware of how they can pursue a complaint if they wish to. Where landlords ask for wider feedback about their services, they also must provide details of how residents can complain.	Yes	Awareness of complaints process in tenant satisfaction surveys	FWH will outline where appropriate, how a resident can raise a complaint should they express dissatisfaction through a survey or any other feedback mechanism. We will include in our tenant satisfaction surveys information on how residents can pursue any dissatisfaction with the service they have received through the complaints process.

Section 2: Exclusions

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
2.1	Landlords must accept a complaint unless there is a valid reason not to do so. If landlords decide not to accept a complaint they must be able to evidence their reasoning. Each complaint must be considered on its own merits	Yes	FWH Complaints Policy (Under point 3.4)	FWH accepts all complaints unless there is a valid reason not to, in which case this will be explained to the complainant.
2.2	A complaints policy must set out the circumstances in which a matter will not be considered as a complaint or escalated, and these circumstances must be fair and reasonable to residents. Acceptable exclusions include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The issue giving rise to the complaint occurred over twelve months ago. • Legal proceedings have started. This is defined as details of the claim, such as the Claim Form and Particulars of Claim, having been filed at court. • Matters that have previously been considered under the complaints 	Yes	FWH Complaints Policy (Under point 3.4)	The Complaints Policy clearly outlines what can and cannot be considered under FWH's complaints process. The circumstances are fair and reasonable and in line with Housing Ombudsman guidance.

	policy.			
2.3	Landlords must accept complaints referred to them within 12 months of the issue occurring or the resident becoming aware of the issue, unless they are excluded on other grounds. Landlords must consider whether to apply discretion to accept complaints made outside this time limit where there are good reasons to do so.	Yes	<u>FWH Complaints Policy</u> (Under point 3.4)	FWH accepts complaints that are made within 12 months of the issue occurring or the complainant becoming aware of the issue unless they are excluded on other grounds. There may be occasions where FWH will apply discretion to investigate complaints which exceed the 12 months period. The Complaints Policy states: "A complaint can be made at any time; however, FWH will not normally accept a complaint where the customer has delayed raising the complaint with FWH by more than 12 months. FWH recommends that contact is made as soon as possible, to ensure access to data is readily available. Complaints exceeding 12 months will be considered on a case by case basis."
2.4	If a landlord decides not to accept a complaint, an explanation must be provided to the resident setting out the reasons why the matter is not suitable	Yes	<u>FWH Complaints Policy</u> (Under point 3.4)	If a complaint is not to be considered, the resident will still receive a response detailing reasons why the

	for the complaints process and the right to take that decision to the Ombudsman. If the Ombudsman does not agree that the exclusion has been fairly applied, the Ombudsman may tell the landlord to take on the complaint.			complaint cannot be considered and the response will include escalation rights.
2.5	Landlords must not take a blanket approach to excluding complaints; they must consider the individual circumstances of each complaint.	Yes	<u>FWH Complaints Policy</u> (Under point 3.4)	FWH will consider complaints exceeding 12 months or other types of complaint that could possibly be excluded on a case-by-case basis. This is noted in the Complaints Policy.

Section 3: Accessibility and Awareness

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
3.1	<p>Landlords must make it easy for residents to complain by providing different channels through which they can make a complaint. Landlords must consider their duties under the Equality Act 2010 and anticipate the needs and reasonable adjustments of residents who may need to access the complaints process.</p>	Yes	<p>FWH Complaints Policy (Under point 3.2)</p>	<p>Complaints can be raised via email, in person, by telephone or using the online form or portal. They can also be submitted via a Councillor or directly to officers if the resident asks for an issue to be processed through the complaints process. We accept all forms of communication including verbal, written or online. FWH is committed to ensuring that all residents can access its services and are not disadvantaged in any way. Below are some of the adjustments that can be offered which are outlined in the FWH's Complaints Policy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use of email or telephone in preference to hard copy letters • use of plain English or Easy Read service on our website

				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • communication through a representative or intermediary • rest or comfort breaks in meetings. • provision of information in appropriate alternative formats (eg. large print, Braille, coloured paper etc.) • provision of auxiliary aids <p>The Equality Act 2010 introduced the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) which FWH considers when carrying out day-to-day functions, crafting policies and delivering services. All staff undertake equality and diversity training, which is part of the FWH's essential training programme.</p>
3.2	Residents must be able to raise their complaints in any way and with any member of staff. All staff must be aware of the complaints process and be able to pass details of the complaint to the appropriate person within the landlord.	Yes	Complaints are accepted in person, on the phone, via email and social media channels	Officers within FWH are made aware of the complaints process. Services know how to log their own complaints and there is a corporate team within the Council to offer assistance and provide training. The Councils Housing Department have a dedicated team who log all housing complaints, including those for FWH.

3.3	High volumes of complaints must not be seen as a negative, as they can be indicative of a well-publicised and accessible complaints process. Low complaint volumes are potentially a sign that residents are unable to complain.	Yes	FWH will be reporting on complaint volumes going forward	FWH welcomes complaints as a way of learning and agrees that the number of complaints is not indicative of a high number of issues within the borough, it can demonstrate awareness of the complaints process.
3.4	Landlords must make their complaint policy available in a clear and accessible format for all residents. This will detail the two stage process, what will happen at each stage, and the timeframes for responding. The policy must also be published on the landlord's website.	Yes	FWH Complaints Policy How to make a complaint Brent Council	Our complaint policy is available on the FWH's website in a clear and accessible format for all residents. The policy is available with voiceover, and can be translated from the toolbar in a number of languages, viewed using screen mask or with enlarged text. The policy explains the complaint stages, what will happen at each stage, and timeframes for a response.
3.5	The policy must explain how the landlord will publicise details of the complaints policy, including information about the Ombudsman and this Code.	Yes	FWH Complaints Policy (under point 6)	The Complaints Policy, the Housing Ombudsman scheme, a copy of the FWH's self-assessment of the code and the Code itself are all publicised on the FWH's complaints webpages. The Policy includes information about the Housing Ombudsman and the Code. Our final review complaint

				responses also signpost residents to the Housing Ombudsman should they remain dissatisfied.
3.6	Landlords must 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.	Yes	<u>FWH Complaints Policy</u> (Under point 3.2)	FWH accept complaints from advocates, a representative or family member as long as consent from the complainant has been provided. Where reasonable they are also able to attend any meetings.
3.7	Landlords must provide residents with information on their right to access the Ombudsman service and how the individual can engage with the Ombudsman about their complaint.	Yes	<u>FWH Complaints Policy</u> (Under point 3.6)	The Complaints Policy details a complainant's right to access the Housing Ombudsman Service throughout their complaint. Contact details for the Housing Ombudsman are available on FWH's webpage and a direct link to the Ombudsman website is also provided in the complaints policy.

Section 4: Complaint Handling Staff

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
4.1	<p>Landlords must have a person or team assigned to take responsibility for complaint handling, including liaison with the Ombudsman and ensuring complaints are reported to the governing body (or equivalent). This Code will refer to that person or team as the 'complaints officer'. This role may be in addition to other duties.</p>	Yes	<p>The Council have a Corporate Complaints team who report to the governing body.</p>	<p>The Housing Companies Operational Team are responsible for compiling an annual report to the FWH Board. In addition, the Council's principal repairs contractor has a dedicated complaints officer, and the Council has weekly complaints meetings to address lessons learnt from complaints and work on next steps including impacts on FWH whom the contractor delivers for.</p>
4.2	<p>The complaints officer must have access to staff at all levels to facilitate the prompt resolution of complaints. They must also have the authority and autonomy to act to resolve disputes promptly and fairly.</p>	Yes	<p>The Corporate Complaints team interact with staff at all levels and have the authority and autonomy to resolve complaints. The team also hold a compensation budget for stage 2 complaints</p>	<p>All complaint handlers receive training on dealing with complaints and complainants. They have autonomy to resolve complaints and approve lower-level compensation payments. There is also direct access to senior staff to facilitate quick resolution and approve higher level payments or complex remedies.</p>

4.3	<p>Landlords are expected to prioritise complaint handling and a culture of learning from complaints. All relevant staff must be suitably trained in the importance of complaint handling. It is important that complaints are seen as a core service and must be resourced to handle complaints effectively</p>	Yes	<p>Complaint Handling training is provided to officers</p>	<p>All relevant staff are suitably trained to handle complaints. Services are reasonably resourced to handle complaints and the Council have a corporate complaints team which is a core service that delivers refresher training sessions for the Housing Management Service, who deliver housing services for FWH</p>
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Section 5: The Complaint Handling Process

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
5.1	<p>Landlords must have a single policy in place for dealing with complaints covered by this Code. Residents must not be treated differently if they complain.</p>	Yes	<p>FWH Complaints Policy</p>	<p>FWH has one single Policy for dealing with complaints which details all the necessary information in regard to the management of complaints. All complainants are treated fairly and in line with the policy. They are not treated adversely if they complain. FWH's policy is consistent with the Council's complaints policy.</p>
5.2	<p>The early and local resolution of issues between landlords and residents is key to effective complaint handling. It is not</p>	Yes	<p>FWH Complaints Policy (Under point 3.5)</p>	<p>If FWH feel that a complaint can be resolved at first point of contact, the resident will be</p>

	appropriate to have extra named stages (such as 'stage 0' or 'informal complaint') as this causes unnecessary confusion.			asked whether they are in agreement for the service to take action. They will be told in writing that after the action is taken, if they are still dissatisfied, they can progress their complaint through the FWH's complaint procedure.
5.3	A process with more than two stages is not acceptable under any circumstances as this will make the complaint process unduly long and delay access to the Ombudsman.	Yes	FWH Complaints Policy	FWH operates a two-stage complaint process.
5.4	Where a landlord's complaint response is handled by a third party (e.g. a contractor or independent adjudicator) at any stage, it must form part of the two stage complaints process set out in this Code. Residents must not be expected to go through two complaints processes.	Yes	We have agreements in place with contractors in relation to complaints handling	We ask any third parties to whom we have delegated complaint handling to respond at stage 1 of the process and if the complainant remains dissatisfied they have a right to escalate to stage 2 in which case the Council's complaints team would investigate and respond on behalf of FWH.
5.5	Landlords are responsible for ensuring that any third parties handle complaints in line with the Code.	Yes	This is included in our third party agreements	We provide third parties with the process which they must follow and ask that they handle complaints in line with the Code. The Council also holds regular meetings with its contractors to discuss volumes and complaints handling, including those impacting

				FWH.
5.6	When a complaint is logged at Stage 1 or escalated to Stage 2, landlords must set out their understanding of the complaint and the outcomes the resident is seeking. The Code will refer to this as “the complaint definition”. If any aspect of the complaint is unclear, the resident must be asked for clarification.	Yes	Complaint acknowledgements have been updated to reflect this	Complaint acknowledgements include a brief summary of the area of complaint and officers dealing with the complaint will promptly contact the complainant to request clarification if any aspect of their complaint is unclear or should the outcome the resident is seeking also not be clear.
5.7	When a complaint is acknowledged at either stage, landlords must be clear which aspects of the complaint they are, and are not, responsible for and clarify any areas where this is not clear.	Yes	Complaint acknowledgements have been updated to reflect this	Complaint acknowledgements make clear what aspects of the complaint are to be investigated and confirm any aspects that fall outside of the policy or aspects for which we are not responsible.
5.8	At each stage of the complaints process, complaint handlers must: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> deal with complaints on their merits, act independently, and have an open mind; give the resident a fair chance to set out their position; take measures to address any actual or perceived conflict of interest; and consider all relevant information and evidence carefully. 	Yes	<u>FWH Complaints Policy</u> (Under point 3.5)	All complaint handlers receive relevant training on complaints handling to conform to the points listed. There is also guidance on the Council's intranet pages to reinforce these points to the Housing Management Service who deliver services on behalf of FWH. Annual Data Protection training is also a mandatory training requirement for all officers. If a complaint

				concerns a particular individual it is assigned to their line manager. The Corporate Complaints team investigate stage 2 complaints independently of the service about which a complaint has been made
5.9	Where a response to a complaint will fall outside the timescales set out in this Code, the landlord must agree with the resident suitable intervals for keeping them informed about their complaint.	Yes	FWH Complaints Policy (Under point 3.6)	Where reasonable, officers will keep residents updated with the progress of their investigation. Complainants are informed in advance on the rare occasions when there will be a delay in responding and will agree on regular updates until a full response is provided
5.10	Landlords must make reasonable adjustments for residents where appropriate under the Equality Act 2010. Landlords must keep a record of any reasonable adjustments agreed, as well as a record of any disabilities a resident has disclosed. Any agreed reasonable adjustments must be kept under active review.	Yes	FWH Complaints Policy (Under point 3.2)	FWH make reasonable adjustments for residents where appropriate. The Complaints Policy provides examples of some of the reasonable adjustments that can be made. Residents can indicate when raising a complaint whether they have any disabilities or require any adjustments. This information is then recorded on their complaint record.
5.11	Landlords must not refuse to escalate a	Yes	FWH Complaints Policy	FWH does not refuse to

	complaint through all stages of the complaints procedure unless it has valid reasons to do so. Landlords must clearly set out these reasons, and they must comply with the provisions set out in section 2 of this Code.		(Under point 3.5)	escalate a complaint through its complaints procedure unless there is a valid reason. Reasons why a complaint may not be escalated are stipulated in FWH's Complaints Policy. A response will be provided to the resident outlining why we will not escalate the complaint.
5.12	A full record must be kept of the complaint, 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 relevant supporting documentation such as reports or surveys.	Yes	This is all contained within the Council's case management system and can be downloaded	All complaint records are documented in the Council's case management system, enabling comprehensive tracking and reporting of all FWH complaints. This includes dates of complaint receipt and responses, relevant correspondence and documentation, and details of any compensation and corrective actions/service improvements and outcomes. Corrective actions and service improvements are separately monitored by the service to ensure actions are carried out. We also record issue types and root causes of complaints.
5.13	Landlords must have processes in place to ensure a complaint can be remedied at any stage of its complaints process. Landlords must ensure appropriate remedies can be	Yes	Officers handling complaints have the autonomy to suggest and implement appropriate remedies at any stage of the complaints process	We do our best to resolve a complaint at the first point of contact. We consider the issues and after full

	provided at any stage of the complaints process without the need for escalation.			consideration will propose a reasonable solution. Any immediate actions will be taken as soon as possible.
5.14	Landlords must have policies and procedures in place for managing unacceptable behaviour from residents and/or their representatives. Landlords must be able to evidence reasons for putting any restrictions in place and must keep restrictions under regular review.	Yes	Vexatious Complaints Policy 2023	The Council's Vexatious Complaints Policy provides procedures on how to manage unacceptable behaviour from residents and/or their representatives when pursuing a complaint. When a person is restricted we keep all evidence in a folder and a reason for restriction is provided in our restriction letter. We have a review period for restrictions. The Council are working on a Council-wide unreasonable behaviour policy
5.15	Any restrictions placed on contact due to unacceptable behaviour must be proportionate and demonstrate regard for the provisions of the Equality Act 2010.	Yes	Vexatious Complaints Policy 2023	Restrictions placed following unacceptable complainant behaviour and managed through the Vexatious Complaints Policy consider the Equality Act 2010 and impact on individual complainants. Only necessary restrictions are applied relating to specific issues. We always allow residents in these circumstances to access Council services more generally.

Section 6: Complaints Stages

Stage 1

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
6.1	<p>Landlords must have processes in place to consider which complaints can be responded to as early as possible, and which require further investigation.</p> <p>Landlords must consider factors such as the complexity of the complaint and whether the resident is vulnerable or at risk. Most stage 1 complaints can be resolved promptly, and an explanation, apology or resolution provided to the resident.</p>	Yes	<p>FWH Complaints Policy (Under point 3.5)</p>	FWH will aim to respond to complaints as early as possible and specifically where there are any risks or vulnerabilities involved and the issue is current/live as well as if the complaint raises something urgent, like an outstanding repair, we will seek to progress that as soon as possible, at the same time as pursuing a complaint investigation. Where the complaint relates to historic issues or is complex these may take longer to investigate
6.2	Complaints must be acknowledged, defined and logged at stage 1 of the complaints procedure <u>within five working days of the complaint being received</u> .	Yes	<p>FWH Complaints Policy (Under point 3.5)</p>	FWH logs and acknowledges all stage 1 complaints within 5 working days. This is also stipulated in our Complaints Policy.
6.3	Landlords must issue a full response to stage 1 complaints <u>within 10 working days</u> of the complaint being acknowledged.	Yes	<p>FWH Complaints Policy (Under point 3.5)</p>	FWH responds to complaints within 10 working days of the complaint being acknowledged.

6.4	Landlords must decide whether an extension to this timescale is needed when considering the complexity of the complaint and then inform the resident of the expected timescale for response. Any extension must be no more than 10 working days without good reason, and the reason(s) must be clearly explained to the resident.	Yes	<u>FWH Complaints Policy</u> (Under point 3.5)	Where FWH requires more time to investigate the issues and provide a response, an email is sent to the resident explaining the reason for the extension and providing a new deadline date which does not exceed 10 working days
6.5	When an organisation informs a resident about an extension to these timescales, they must be provided with the contact details of the Ombudsman.	Yes	Email acknowledgements have been updated to reflect this.	When we request for an extension of the timescales in our email to the complainant we will include details of the Ombudsman.
6.6	A complaint response must be provided 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 promptly with appropriate updates provided to the resident.	Yes	<u>FWH Complaints Policy</u> (Under point 3.6)	A complaint response is provided once an investigation has been completed and no later than the maximum timescale outlined in the Complaints Policy. Any actions required following the investigation will be logged with a timescale and tracked until completion on the Council's complaints system.
6.7	Landlords must address all points raised in the complaint definition and provide clear reasons for any decisions, referencing the relevant policy, law and good practice where appropriate.	Yes	FWH has a template letter which officers need to follow when responding to complaints to ensure a thorough response is provided	FWH addresses all points raised in the complaint, clearly providing reasons for decisions, and referencing any relevant law/good practice.
6.8	Where residents raise additional complaints during the investigation, these must be	Yes	<u>FWH Complaints Policy</u>	Where additional complaints are raised during the

	incorporated into the stage 1 response if they are related and the stage 1 response has not been issued. Where the stage 1 response has been issued, the new issues are unrelated to the issues already being investigated or it would unreasonably delay the response, the new issues must be logged as a new complaint.		(Under point 3.6)	investigation, these will be incorporated if relevant and if the response has not yet been issued. If the issues require significant time to be looked into and would delay the response, a new complaint will be logged, or new timescale will be agreed with both parties
6.9	<p>Landlords must confirm the following in writing to the resident at the completion of stage 1 in clear, plain language:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. the complaint stage; b. the complaint definition; c. the decision on the complaint; d. the reasons for any decisions made; e. the details of any remedy offered to put things right; f. details of any outstanding actions; and g. details of how to escalate the matter to stage 2 if the individual is not satisfied with the response. 	Yes	FWH has a template letter which officers need to follow when responding to complaints to ensure all points are covered.	FWH has a template available for officers to use so that all the points (a-g) are addressed within the response.

Stage 2

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
6.10	If all or part of the complaint is not resolved to the resident's satisfaction at stage 1, it must be progressed to stage 2 of the landlord's procedure. Stage 2 is the landlord's final response.	Yes	We have a two-stage process, and escalation details are provided in all stage 1 responses.	All stage 1 complaint responses inform complainants that if they remain dissatisfied, they can escalate their complaint to stage 2 and details are

				provided of how they can do this.
6.11	Requests for stage 2 must be acknowledged, defined and logged at stage 2 of the complaints procedure within five working days of the escalation request being received.	Yes	All stage 2 complaints are acknowledged, defined and logged within 5 working days as per the Complaints Policy	All stage 2 complaints are defined and acknowledged within 5 working days of receipt.
6.12	Residents must not be required to explain their reasons for requesting a stage 2 consideration. Landlords are expected to make reasonable efforts to understand why a resident remains unhappy as part of its stage 2 response.	Yes	Officers make reasonable enquiries to determine what points are outstanding	FWH will make reasonable efforts to understand why complainants remain unhappy, however, if it is not clear we will ask the complainant for clarification so that we can ensure we address all the issues they remain unhappy with and avoid any misunderstanding.
6.13	The person considering the complaint at stage 2 must not be the same person that considered the complaint at stage 1.	Yes	FWH Complaints Policy (Under point 3.5)	All stage 2 responses are investigated by the FWH team, signed off and responded to by a FWH director on behalf of the FWH Board. All are independent of the service area and officer who has responded at stage 1.
6.14	Landlords must issue a final response to the stage 2 <u>within 20 working days</u> of the complaint being acknowledged.	Yes	FWH Complaints Policy (Under point 3.5)	FWH aims to respond to all stage 2 complaints within 20 working days of acknowledgement, where

				possible.
6.15	Landlords must decide whether an extension to this timescale is needed when considering the complexity of the complaint and then inform the resident of the expected timescale for response. Any extension must be no more than 20 working days without good reason, and the reason(s) must be clearly explained to the resident.	Yes	<u>FWH Complaints Policy</u> (Under point 3.5)	When considering a complaint escalation that has been received and it is clear that due to complexity or other factors that more time will be required to investigate, we will inform the complainant in the acknowledgment or a further email of the new expected timescale which will not exceed an additional 20 working days.
6.16	When an organisation informs a resident about an extension to these timescales, they must be provided with the contact details of the Ombudsman.	Yes	Complaint acknowledgements have been updated to cover this	We shall provide details of the Ombudsman when we require an extension of the response timescales
6.17	A complaint response must be provided 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 promptly with appropriate updates provided to the resident.	Yes	<u>FWH Complaints Policy</u> (Under point 3.6)	A complaint response is provided once an investigation has been completed and no later than the maximum timescale outlined in the Complaints Policy. Any actions required following the investigation will be logged with a timescale and tracked until completion on the relevant complaints system on FWH's behalf.

6.18	Landlords must address all points raised in the complaint definition and provide clear reasons for any decisions, referencing the relevant policy, law and good practice where appropriate.	Yes	FWH has a template letter which officers need to follow when responding to complaints to ensure a thorough response is provided	FWH addresses all points raised in the complaint, clearly providing reasons for decisions, and referencing any relevant law/good practice.
6.19	Landlords must confirm the following in writing to the resident at the completion of stage 2 in clear, plain language: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. the complaint stage; b. the complaint definition; c. the decision on the complaint; d. the reasons for any decisions made; e. the details of any remedy offered to put things right; f. details of any outstanding actions; and g. details of how to escalate the matter to the Ombudsman Service if the individual remains dissatisfied. 	Yes	FWH has a template letter which officers need to follow when responding to complaints to ensure all points are covered.	At the completion of a stage 2 investigation, a response is issued which includes the points stated. The response includes a summary of the complaint, a chronology of any relevant events, the decision and reasons for it. It also includes any actions and learning with timescales for implementation and a reasonable remedy which may include compensation.
6.20	Stage 2 is the landlord's final response and must involve all suitable staff members needed to issue such a response.	Yes	<u>FWH Complaints Policy</u> (Under point 3.5)	All relevant officers are consulted before a second stage complaint response is finalised, to ensure that the decision is a properly corporate one.

Section 7: Putting things right

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
7.1	<p>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. These can include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apologising; • Acknowledging where things have gone wrong; • Providing an explanation, assistance or reasons; • Taking action if there has been delay; • Reconsidering or changing a decision; • Amending a record or adding a correction or addendum; • Providing a financial remedy; • Changing policies, procedures or practices. 	Yes	<p>In complaint responses if we are in the wrong, we will apologise, explain what happened and provide information on what actions will be taken to remedy the issue whether that be a change in policy or procedure, sending a reminder to staff, taking specific action or providing a financial remedy. All actions are documented on FWH's complaints system and assigned to an officer to action</p>	<p>FWH will always try to resolve the issues as soon as possible. If FWH is at fault, it will accept fault, offer an apology, and provide a plan of action to put things right if the issues have not yet been resolved.</p>
7.2	<p>Any remedy offered must reflect the impact on the resident as a result of any fault identified.</p>	Yes	<p>FWH Complaints Policy (Under point 4.1)</p>	<p>FWH follows the remedies guidance provided by the Housing Ombudsman. All remedies are considered on their own merit and in line with published guidelines. FWH will try its best to manage expectations of what remedies can and cannot be</p>

				delivered.
7.3	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	Remedies are logged on the Complaint system and assigned to an officer with a timescale for completion	Any actions to be taken to remedy fault will be explained and clear timescales will be provided. Corrective actions will be monitored and tracked to completion.
7.4	Landlords must take account of the guidance issued by the Ombudsman when deciding on appropriate remedies.	Yes	<u>FWH Complaints Policy</u> (Under point 4.1)	FWH follows the Housing Ombudsman guidance on compensation and considers payments that are required by law, any refunds/reimbursement of losses, time and trouble, distress and inconvenience.

Section 8: Putting things right

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
8.1	<p>Landlords must produce an annual complaints performance and service improvement report for scrutiny and challenge, which must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. the annual self-assessment against this Code to ensure their complaint handling policy remains in line with its requirements. b. a qualitative and quantitative analysis of the landlord's complaint handling performance. This must also include a summary of the types of complaints the landlord has refused to accept; c. any findings of non-compliance with this Code by the Ombudsman; d. the service improvements made as a result of the learning from complaints; e. any annual report about the landlord's performance from the Ombudsman; and f. any other relevant reports or publications produced by the Ombudsman in relation to the work of 	Yes	<p>Open data link to annual reports: Annual Report Data</p>	<p>The Council produces an annual report which includes its self-assessment of the Code, quantitative and qualitative data on performance and the types of complaints received, any findings of non-compliance with the Code, any annual report about the landlord's performance from the Ombudsman, and any other relevant reports or publications produced by the Ombudsman in relation to the work of the landlord.</p> <p>The report is then reviewed through the Council's governance procedures which includes Cabinet and relevant scrutiny committees. FWH creates its own annual report for submission to its Board – which includes Council directors, independent directors, and councillors.</p>

	the landlord.			
8.2	The annual complaints performance and service improvement report must be reported to the landlord's governing body (or equivalent) and published on the on the section of its website relating to complaints. The governing body's response to the report must be published alongside this.	Yes	<p>Copy of latest annual report on relevant website page: Latest Annual Report</p> <p>Cabinet response to report: Cabinet Report and Governing Body's Comments</p>	<p>The Council produces an annual report which includes our self-assessment of the Code, quantitative and qualitative data on performance and the types of complaints received, any findings of non-compliance with the Code, any annual report about the landlord's performance from the Ombudsman, and any other relevant reports or publications produced by the Ombudsman in relation to the work of the landlord.</p> <p>FWH creates its own annual report for submission to its Board – which includes Council directors, independent directors, and councillors.</p>
8.3	Landlords must also carry out a self-assessment following a significant restructure, merger and/or change in procedures.	Yes	FWH was included in the Council's last self-assessment which was carried out last year and was included as an appendix in the annual report for 22/23	FWH will carry out a self-assessment if there have been significant changes. The outcome of the self-assessment is reported to elected members. It will also be published on the FWH's website and included in the annual complaints report.

8.4	Landlords may be asked to review and update the self-assessment following an Ombudsman investigation.	Yes	We self-assess against the Code on an annual basis and when asked by the Ombudsman.	Noted. FWH has not to date been asked to update the self-assessment following an Ombudsman investigation.
8.5	If a landlord is unable to comply with the Code due to exceptional circumstances, such as a cyber incident, they must inform the Ombudsman, provide information to residents who may be affected, and publish this on their website Landlords must provide a timescale for returning to compliance with the Code.	Yes	We will alert the Ombudsman and resident if we are unable to comply with the Code due to exceptional reasons.	FWH will inform the Ombudsman if due to exceptional circumstances we are unable to comply with the requirements of the Code. We will advise complainants who may be affected, and we will publish on our website a timescale of when we will be returning to compliance with the Code.

Section 9: Scrutiny & oversight: continuous learning and improvement

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
9.1	Landlords must look beyond the circumstances of the individual complaint and consider whether service improvements can be made as a result of any learning from the complaint.	Yes	Learning and improvements are included in the Council Annual Complaint Report	FWH will always look beyond the circumstances of the complaint and try to learn lessons from complaints and implement any more general service improvements to benefit residents
9.2	A positive complaint handling culture is integral to the effectiveness with which landlords resolve disputes. Landlords must use complaints as a source of intelligence to identify issues and introduce positive changes in service delivery.	Yes	We discuss complaints in our departmental management meets and report on performance and quality of responses on an annual basis.	FWH uses the learning and feedback from complaints to inform decisions, learning and improvements. FWH continuously scrutinise complaints data to identify themes and trends so that change can be made to prevent issues occurring.
9.3	Accountability and transparency are also integral to a positive complaint handling culture. Landlords must report back on wider learning and improvements from complaints to stakeholders, such as residents' panels, staff and relevant committees.	Yes	Wider learning and improvements are included in the annual report which goes to relevant scrutiny committees. We also discuss complaints during residents' panels	Learning from complaints is included in the Council's annual complaints report which goes to the Board and is considered at scrutiny committees. If some of the recommendations include

				training needs or reminders to staff, senior managers will communicate this. Residents are informed in complaints responses of any service improvements that will be implemented as a result of their complaint. Under the new tenant engagement strategy and model there is a clear commitment to respecting resident feedback and how this is not only implemented in the service but positive change is communicated back to the resident.
9.4	Landlords must appoint a suitably senior lead person as accountable for their complaint handling. This person must assess any themes or trends to identify potential systemic issues, serious risks, or policies and procedures that require revision.	Yes	The Strategic Partnerships and Engagement Manager is the appointed person	The Strategic Partnerships and Engagement Manager is the senior lead person accountable for complaint handling for FWH complaints. They are provided with data on stage 1, stage 2 and Ombudsman enquiries and has the autonomy to direct service changes.
9.5	In addition to this a member of the governing body (or equivalent) must be appointed to have lead responsibility for complaints to support a positive complaint handling culture. This person	Yes	The Chair of the FWH Board is the MRC	Complaints are reported quarterly to the FWH Board. The FWH Chair will be known as the MRC.

	is referred to as the Member Responsible for Complaints ('the MRC').			
9.6	The MRC will be responsible for ensuring the governing body receives regular information on complaints that provides insight on the landlord's complaint handling performance. This person must have access to suitable information and staff to perform this role and report on their findings.	Yes	The MRC has access to staff who will provide the relevant information for discussion with the governing body	The Chair will receive regular updates on complaint performance data and is copied into all upheld Ombudsman decisions (the anonymised report only). They have a direct line in to the Corporate Director Finance and Resources who oversees the corporate complaints team.
9.7	As a minimum, the MRC and the governing body (or equivalent) must receive: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> regular updates on the volume, categories and outcomes of complaints, alongside complaint handling performance; regular reviews of issues and trends arising from complaint handling; regular updates on the outcomes of the Ombudsman's investigations and progress made in complying with orders related to severe maladministration findings; and annual complaints performance and service improvement report. 	Yes	The MRC is update quarterly and received the annual complaints report which includes all the data outlined	Information relating to complaints is provided annually to the FWH Board which includes: volumes, performance, outcomes, compensation, root causes, and Ombudsman cases.
9.8	Landlords must have a standard	Yes	We share our objectives with staff	FWH works collaboratively

	<p>objective in relation to complaint handling for all relevant employees or third parties that reflects the need to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. have a collaborative and co-operative approach towards resolving complaints, working with colleagues across teams and departments; b. take collective responsibility for any shortfalls identified through complaints, rather than blaming others; and c. act within the professional standards for engaging with complaints as set by any relevant professional body. 		<p>and contractors that are working on our behalf to ensure there is one goal and we work together to achieve it for the benefit of our residents</p>	<p>with teams across departments to achieve a joined up approach to complaints.</p>
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