

Ferring Village Hall (Charity No. 1167736)

Complaints Policy

1. Introduction

Ferring Village Hall (FVH) is a registered charity whose objects are to run a village hall and to promote for the benefit of the inhabitants of Ferring without distinction of sex, sexual orientation, age, disability, nationality, race or political, religious or other opinions the provision of facilities for recreation and leisure.

FVH and its property are administered and managed by appointed trustees.

FVH is committed to maintaining its strong partnership with members of the local community and the users of the village hall. We are open to feedback and comments about our work, both positive and negative, as these can provide us with valuable information about our effectiveness and how we can better meet our aims.

If any user of the village hall or member of the local community is unhappy about the standard of service provided, the quality of the facilities within the village hall, the safety of users, the handling of a particular situation or issue, or any other matter, FVH Trustees would wish to work to rectify this.

FVH Trustees are committed to equal opportunities and we take complaints about discrimination very seriously. The adoption of a clear complaints procedure will help the FVH Trustees to ensure that most complaints are resolved quickly and smoothly and as close to the source of the misunderstanding or problem as possible.

2. Policy aims

Our policy is intended to:

- Provide a transparent and fair complaints procedure which is clear and easy to use for anyone wishing to make a complaint.
- Publicise the existence of our complaints procedure so that people know how to contact us to make a complaint.
- Make sure that the FVH Trustees are aware that a complaint has been made and know what to do if a complaint is received. The Trustees expect to hear about a complaint within three months of any incident.
- Make sure all complaints are investigated fairly and in a timely way.
- Make sure that complaints are, wherever possible, resolved quickly and that relationships remain healthy, so all our users benefit.
- Gather information that will help us to improve what we do.

3. Complaints, confidentiality and responsibility

Definition of a Complaint

A complaint is any expression of dissatisfaction, whether justified or not, about any aspect of FVH.

Where may complaints come from

Complaints may come from hirers, members of the public or persons and organisations using the village hall, local residents or suppliers or their representatives.

How to make contact about a complaint

A complaint can be made in writing (which includes email). Written complaints should be directed to:

the Chairman ferringvh.chairman@gmail.com or

the Secretary ferringvh.sec@gmail.com

A complaint can also be made verbally, face to face or by phone (in which case we will make a note of the complaint).

Confidentiality and data protection

All complaints will be handled sensitively and confidentially, telling only those who need to know. We will follow our Data Protection Policy in that regard.

Complaint handling

The Trustees, staff or volunteers will not discriminate in any way in their dealings with handling complaints.

Whoever you speak to regarding your complaint, they will be respectful, calm and listen to your complaint.

We will take notes to record the facts so we can deal with your complaint. We may seek clarification on some details in order to help you more effectively. Once we have recorded the details of your complaint, we will confirm the same with you to ensure we have understood the details correctly.

Where appropriate, we may ask what a successful resolution would look like from your point of view.

Responsibility

Overall responsibility for this policy and its implementation lies with FVH Trustees.

The Trustees aim to acknowledge complaints within five working days and give a full response to complainants within fourteen days.

If the complaint is judged to involve complex issues, complainants will be informed within fourteen days when they can expect a full response. The main aim throughout the process is to resolve the matter as quickly and effectively as possible to everybody's satisfaction.

4. Procedure for handling complaints

What to do if something goes wrong:

Step 1- informal process

Informal complaints should be raised with:

the Chairman ferringvh.chairman@gmail.com or

the Secretary ferringvh.sec@gmail.com

If we are unable to address a complaint informally or the complainant remains dissatisfied at this stage, it may be appropriate to raise the matter as a formal complaint. See step 2 below.

Step 2- formal process

Where the step 1 informal process is inappropriate and/or has not resolved the matter satisfactorily, please contact the Chairman or Secretary in writing by letter or email (email addresses above) setting out the details of the complaint or concern.

Your written complaint should contain as much information as possible, including:

- your name, address, telephone number and email address to enable us to contact you in the way that suits you best;
- all the facts relating to the complaint
- your relationship with FVH, e.g. hirer, hall user, local resident, etc.

Once we have received your complaint and all the related details, we will first acknowledge your complaint within five working and will aim to give a full response within fourteen days.

If the complaint is judged to involve complex issues, complainants will be informed within fourteen days when they can expect a full response. We will aim to be clear on the timeframe but much will depend on the nature of the complaint and the extent of any investigation.

Where we have to gather information, which may take time, or if your complaint is complex, we will inform you of that fact and agree a timescale with you, sharing the steps required so everyone understands why this is necessary.

We will take steps to speak to any other party involved to ensure everyone has a fair opportunity to make representations.

In responding to your complaint, we will share with you what action we have taken, the conclusions we have reached from any investigation and any action resulting from your complaint.

5. Review

This policy shall be circulated to all Trustees for information and review annually.

Approved by the Trustees on 15 March 2023