

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

What is a Qualifying Long-Term Agreement? (QLTA)

A Qualifying Long-Term Agreement is a contract between Aster and an independent contractor to provide services or carry out works for more than 12 months. By having a long-term contract in place, we can ensure these services continue to be delivered efficiently and consistently.

Why are you changing the service I currently receive?

Our current contract for cyclical decoration works is coming to an end. We are reviewing our arrangements and appointing a new contractor to ensure these important maintenance services continue to be delivered to our homes and buildings.

I already pay into a sinking or reserve fund. Will this be affected?

Some of the costs for these works may be covered by your reserve or sinking fund. Your Service Charge Officer will be able to give you more detail once the work to your block has been delivered.

What are cyclical decorations and repairs?

Cyclical decorations and repairs are planned maintenance works carried out to keep communal and external areas of your building in good condition. These works are usually carried out every seven years, in line with the terms of your lease.

Examples of work may include:

Painting

External walls and render
Timber windows
External doors
Internal communal walls
Timber fascias, soffits and bargeboards

Repairs

Repairs to damaged timber
External render repairs
Roof tile repairs and replacements
Internal plaster repairs
Brickwork and pointing repairs

Please note that this is not a complete list and the work required will vary from building to building.

Will I have to contribute towards the cost of the works?

If you are a leaseholder, you will usually be responsible for contributing towards the cost of the works. The amount you pay will be calculated in line with the terms of your lease.

Before any works take place, we will provide you with an estimate of the costs and give you the opportunity to comment on the proposed works.

My property was recently painted. Will it be painted again?

No. This contract covers many Aster properties, your home will only be included when it is due for decoration under our cyclical maintenance programme, which is typically every seven years.

Why aren't any costs included in this consultation?

This consultation is about the proposed Qualifying Long-Term Agreement and is not a demand for payment.

When works are planned for your property, we will send you further information, including an estimated cost and details of the proposed works, before they begin.

I own my flat. Will I still need to pay?

Yes, if your lease requires you to contribute towards these costs. Although you own the lease to your flat, Aster remains responsible for maintaining the building's exterior and communal areas, and leaseholders may be required to contribute towards these costs through service charges.

I rent my flat. Will I still need to pay?

No. These costs apply to the leaseholder rather than the tenant. If you have received this information and are a tenant, please pass it on to the leaseholder if possible.

How much will this cost me?

At this stage, we cannot confirm the exact cost. This notice is not a demand for payment. When your property is due for works, we will provide you with an estimate of cost before any work starts.

Are you simply changing contractors?

We are carrying out a formal procurement process because our existing contracts are due to end. This helps us ensure we appoint appropriately qualified contractors who can continue to deliver high-quality services and provide value for money.

Will legal costs be added to my service charges because of this consultation?

No. Although the consultation is a legal requirement under Section 20 legislation, there are no legal costs associated with this consultation that will be charged to you.

Can I have more information about the services included in the agreement?

Yes. A detailed specification can be found on our website at www.aster.co.uk by searching for "Have Your Say".

Alternatively, you can request a copy by email or arrange to view the information at one of our offices by appointment.

I am unhappy with the current service. Can I raise this through the consultation?

No. The purpose of this consultation is to discuss the proposed Qualifying Long-Term Agreement. If you have concerns about current services or work already carried out, please contact our Customer Contact Centre, who will ensure your concerns are directed to the correct team.

I am planning to sell my property before the works are completed. What should I do?

Please keep all consultation documents in a safe place and give them to your solicitor when you sell your property. Any prospective purchaser should be made aware of planned works that may affect the property.

Where can I get independent advice?

You can contact your local Citizens Advice Bureau for independent advice.

You may also find the following websites helpful:

www.lease-advice.org

www.leaseholderadvicecentre.co.uk

These organisations provide information and guidance on leasehold matters and the Section 20 consultation process.