

# Our customer promises

ASTER  
GROUP

# Our promise

You're the reason we're here, and these **Customer Promises** are our commitment to you. Every one of our 1,450 people are signed-up to these **Promises** and when engaging with you there are a few things that we'll always do:

- **Easy** – We'll make things easy and focus on what matters to you.
- **Accountable** – We'll give you the right information in a timely way and we'll come back to you when we say we will.
- **Friendly** – We'll listen and take the time to understand what we can do to help.
- **Available** – It's up to you how you contact us. Whether that's via the MyAster portal, by phone, online, in person, or in writing, we'll make it as simple as possible.
- **Open** – We'll treat you fairly. We'll be open and honest when we talk to you and we'll work with you to solve problems and make things better.

We can only do this though if you also play your part. So we can provide you with the services, and advice you need, it's important we all treat each other with respect and kindness.

We will do our best to tailor our services to meet your needs, and it's important we let each other know when there are changes that affect your home, tenancy or lease.

It's also important that you allow us access to carry out visits, repairs and safety inspections when we need to.





# Our customer service promise

We want to make contacting us as easy as possible. So, whether you prefer to use the MyAster portal, contact us by email, fill in a web form, speak to us on the phone, write to us, or chat to us face-to-face you can.

- After an enquiry we'll respond to you within two working days, where we'll let you know what the next steps are.
- We'll provide an interpretation service and / or loop system should you need it.

Your information will be treated in confidence and the data we hold about you will be compliant with the latest General Data Protection Regulations.



# Our lettings service promise

If you're interested in moving into one of our homes, you'll need to register with your local authority.

Once you have successfully bid on a property we'll be in touch to ask you to send us some information so we can review your application.

- We'll work with you, checking to make sure you're eligible for your new home and can afford the rent. You'll need to tell us about any changes that might affect your application, for example if your benefits or family circumstances change.
- We know you'll be excited to see the home you've applied for, and we have a range of ways you can do this, including a virtual video tour.
- We need to know as soon as possible if you're happy with the home we've shown you, as there will be other people who will be waiting to view it too.

Once you're happy to go ahead, we'll be in touch to talk about next steps and any up-front costs you need to pay before you move in – in most cases we need four weeks' rent before you move in.

Our team will arrange a time to go through the tenancy agreement with you and answer any questions about your new home.

If you're interested in moving into one of our homes, please speak to your local authority to ask if you're eligible.

- To find out more, read our lettings service policy, which you can find here: **Aster's Lettings Policy**.



# Our tenancy promise

Once you've moved into your new home, we'll be in touch within six weeks to see how you're settling in and answer any questions you may have about your home or tenancy agreement.

- We want to make sure it's easy for you to contact us, so we'll let you know about all the ways you can do that, including where to find details of our neighbourhood team on our website.
- We'll ask you how you're finding the MyAster self-serve portal to manage your tenancy or raise repairs and show you how to use it if you've not yet registered.
- Occasionally we will visit you in your home to talk to you about any changes in circumstances or support you may need.
- To find out more, read our tenancy policy which you can find here: **Aster's Tenancy Policy**.





# Our repairs & maintenance promise

We're passionate about providing well maintained, safe homes, but we know that sometimes things may break or go wrong. When that happens, we're here to fix the problem.

- You can raise repairs and book appointments through the MyAster self-serve portal or call **0333 400 8222**.
- We'll work together to ensure your safety, and that of our colleagues / contractors comes first.
- We'll try to resolve the issue in the first visit, however sometimes it might take longer.
- If it does, we'll tell you how long it'll take and keep you informed about appointments.
- If you need to change the time or day of your appointment, it's important that you let us know.

Sometimes damage might be caused accidentally in your home by you, or your visitors and if this happens, we ask that you take responsibility and arrange for the damage to be fixed. If you are unable to do this, we can organise the repairs for you, but you will be charged.



# Our repairs & maintenance promise

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We're passionate about providing well maintained, safe homes, but we know that sometimes things may break or go wrong. When that happens, we're here to fix the problem.

- To help keep you safe, you'll need to allow us access to carry out essential gas, lift and electrical safety inspections.
- To give you peace of mind, we'll always show ID at every visit and ensure we leave all areas clean and tidy.

If you need us to make changes to your property, like installing grab rails or a wet room to help you to continue to live comfortably in your home, or if you want to ask permission for home improvements, please call us on **0333 400 8222** to find out how we may be able to help you.

- To find out more, read our repairs policy which you can find here:  
**Aster's Repairs & Maintenance Policy.**



# Our rent & service charge promise

We want to make managing your home simple and easy. We'll make sure you know how much your rent and service charge are, and we'll keep you informed about any changes to your account.

- Service charges are reviewed each year and are set at the level needed to cover the cost of the services provided.
- You'll be kept informed each year of any changes and we'll make sure the information we provide is clear and easy to understand.
- Every lease or tenancy is different, so our service charges vary based on the services we supply.
- Unless you're in temporary accommodation you'll pay a variable service charge for the services we supply, which means they can go up or down.
- We'll publish information on our website about how you can pay your rent and service charges on time.

If you claim benefits such as Universal Credit to help pay your rent, remember it's your responsibility to make sure you have spoken to your local authority or the Department for Work and Pensions about this.





# Our rent & service charge promise

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We want to make managing your home simple and easy. We'll make sure you know how much your rent and service charge are, and we'll keep you informed about any changes to your account.

- We know life can be challenging so if times get tough and you find yourself having problems paying your rent or service charges, we're here to talk, so please get in touch with us as soon as you can as we may be able to help.
- We have a financial wellbeing team who work in close partnership with other agencies that may be able to support you, so if you find yourself in financial hardship, please talk to us as soon as possible.
- To find out more, read our rent policy which you can find here: **Aster's Rent Policy**.
- For service charges, you can find more information here: **Aster's Service Charge Policy**.



# Our Independent Living service promise

We will offer a range of housing options to help you live as independently as possible, whether that's in your own home or in one of our independent living schemes.

- Our service has been developed to empower our older customers or individuals with additional needs and offers extra security, a 24-hour emergency alarm call system and access to our local specialised Independent Living teams.
- We work with our partners in health and social care and in the community to make sure you receive the best care and advice by signposting to the relevant agencies to support you on your journey.
- We'll also point you in the right direction to apply for any grants or tailored adaptations you may be eligible for.

If you choose to use our technology enabled care services to help you to remain independent in your own home, we'll make it as easy as possible to access these services by providing you with a single number to call.

To find out more, read our independent living policy which you can find here: **Aster's Independent Living Policy**.



# Our neighbourhood promise

We'll work with you, and our partner agencies to help make our communities nice places to live. Together we will look to resolve any issues we see, or you have reported to us.

- Where we have a responsibility, we'll complete ground maintenance work, such as cutting the communal grass. We'll also carry out maintenance where and when required, and always in line with best practice.
- You can also help by keeping your gardens clean and tidy, making sure shared areas are clear of obstructions and fire hazards and letting us know about any issues such as abandoned cars or graffiti.
- To find out more, read our estate management policy, which you can find here: **Aster's Estate Management Policy**.





# Our anti-social behaviour service promise

We want you to be proud of your home and your neighbourhood and to feel safe and secure where you live. We understand the impact anti-social behaviour (ASB) can have on you and the community.

- If you've been unable to resolve an issue with your neighbour, make sure you report the problem to us. We'll respond to every single report of ASB within 5 working days, including if it is a high-level incident such as domestic abuse or a hate crime, within two working days.
- Communication is important and we'll give you a clear timeline of when you can expect to hear from us with updates or information about your case.
- We'll work in partnership with other agencies, like the police or local authority, to ensure a speedy and acceptable outcome, and we'll stay in contact with you to offer advice and guidance throughout.
- We'll only ever take legal action when it is both fair and the right thing to do, and there is evidence to support this.
- You can help by making sure those who live with you, or are visiting, behave with respect and consideration for your neighbours.
- Before a case is closed, we will always discuss the outcome with you.
- To find out more, read our anti-social behaviour policy which you can find here: **Aster's Anti-Social Behaviour Policy**.
- And to see how we can support you if you experience domestic abuse, our policy is here: **Aster's Domestic Abuse Policy**.



# Our homeowner service promise

Buying your home is an exciting time, so once you've moved into your new property, we want to make it as easy as possible for you to contact us, should you need to.

- We'll let you know what your legal and financial responsibilities are as well as make sure you understand what we'll take care of for you. For example, if you're buying a flat in one of our residential blocks, this could include things like buildings insurance.
- We'll publish information on our website, and we'll keep you up to date with any changes that affect you.
- To help keep you safe it's important you allow us access into your home to carry out routine safety inspections and report any damage or repairs needed in communal areas.
- To find out more, read our leaseholder policy which you can find here:  
**Aster's Leasehold Policy.**
- Find out more about the shared ownership service here:  
**Aster Shared Ownership.**



# Our complaints service promise

We know there may be times when you aren't completely happy with the service we provide. We'll do our best to resolve any issues but, if you're still not happy, and you would like to make a formal complaint, we will make it as straight forward for you as possible.

- We'll acknowledge your complaint within two working days, and we'll let you know what you can expect from us right from the start, giving you a clear timeline and an outline of our next steps. If you're still not happy we'll let you know how you can take your complaint further.
- We are committed to improving our services and make sure we consider what we can learn from every complaint received.
- To find out more, read our complaints policy which you can find here:  
**Aster's Complaints Policy.**

And **click here** to read the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code.

It's important to us that we build relationships based on respect and trust, which we aim to do in partnership with you, our customers.

We know people may act out of character in times of trouble or distress, but we ask that you don't use abusive language, place unreasonable demands on, or use aggressive behaviour towards our colleagues.





# Our services

**Tell us what you think about our services.**

We use the feedback we get from our customers to shape the way we deliver our services. It's important you tell us what you think so we can use your feedback to make positive changes to the way we do things.

- If you'd like to learn more, or want to get involved there's more information here: **Aster's Customer Voice service.**
- Providing great customer service is part of our culture, if you've been impressed with the service you've received from one of our team we'd love to know, click here: **Leave feedback for Aster.**
- Sometimes there might be occasions when we don't get things quite right, so please tell us if you feel we haven't met any of Our **Promises**, which you can also do here: **Leave feedback for Aster.**
- To read our customer voice commitments and how they affect you, click here: **Aster's Customer Voice commitments.**

**Contact us on:**  
**0333 400 8222**

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