

1 Scope

- 1.1 This policy sets out how we will let our general needs, housing for older people, extra care, supported accommodation, intermediate, social and affordable rent homes. (This policy does not cover market rent properties, temporary accommodation, shared ownership properties and garages).
- 1.2 Aster is committed to providing good quality affordable homes to people in housing need as assessed by partner agencies, subject to relevant checks.
- 1.3 In aiming to make best use of the housing we own, there is clear guidance around the size of home we will offer for each type of household. We will inform all applicants/existing tenants of the potential impact of welfare reform and the under-occupation penalty in regard to bedroom entitlement.

2 Policy Statement

- 2.1 We will aim to make the best use of all our properties and will let our homes as quickly as possible to avoid loss of rent, vandalism or squatting.
- 2.2 We will take into account the needs and aspirations of existing and potential customers and try to offer a range of appropriate housing products to meet their requirements.
- 2.3 We aim to let our homes in a fair, transparent and efficient way, making the best use of the housing available to promote settled communities.
- 2.4 We will work closely with Local Authorities and contribute to supporting them to meet their strategic housing aspirations where possible.
- 2.5 We will let the majority of our homes to people nominated by Local Authorities and other statutory agencies, for example through Choice Based Lettings (CBL) schemes. We reserve the right to refuse a nomination that does not meet our lettings criteria and reserve the right to allocate direct to applicants and/or customers in line with our agreements with our Local Authority partners.
- 2.6 We will provide all applicants for our homes with advice and guidance on accessing housing, including signposting support with the application and bidding process, when requested.
- 2.7 When letting our homes, we will work closely with applicants and partner agencies to identify any vulnerability or support needs and ensure support packages from appropriate agencies are in place.
- 2.8 We will encourage, support and prioritise our existing customers to move to smaller homes if their current ones are larger than they need or can afford.

- 2.9 We will encourage and support home swaps (mutual exchanges) and provide free subscription for all existing customers to a national home swap service.
- 2.10 We will work with Local Authorities and other stakeholders to develop a Local Lettings Plan (LLP) with the aim of improving access to housing and creating sustainable neighbourhoods.
- 2.11 We will aim to make sure every property is let in a safe, clean condition which reaches our defined lettable standard.
- 2.12 We will let our homes in accordance with any Town and Country Planning Acts in place and ensure the criteria are clearly advertised.
- 2.13 We will only let a property to an Aster Group employee, their relatives, Non-Executive Directors or their relatives in accordance with Aster's Probity Guidance.
- 2.14 We will offer the following types of tenancy, depending on the criteria and circumstance of the prospective tenant/property:
- Assured Tenancies
 - Fixed Term Tenancies
 - Starter Tenancies
 - Assured Shorthold Tenancies
 - Licences - for circumstances where issuing a Starter Tenancy is not appropriate.

3 Monitoring and Review

- 3.1 This policy will be reviewed every 3 years unless there is a change to legislation, regulation or a service provided by us.
- 3.2 The effectiveness of this policy will be scrutinised annually by the Business Performance & Strategy Panel.
- 3.3 The policy will be introduced at Lettings team meetings.
- 3.4 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) will be utilised to monitor its implementation including – re-let times, refusals and rejections, % of first offers taken, void rent loss, CORE reports.
- 3.5 A follow up session with Lettings teams will be carried out 6 months following implementation to ensure policy is fully understood and that we are compliant.
- 3.6 We will use customer feedback and lessons learnt from complaints.
- 3.7 We will ensure monitoring of the Lettings service standards/promise.

4 Related Policies and Procedures

- Tenancy Policy
- Honesty Policy
- Safeguarding Adults & Children Policy
- Income Recovery Policy
- Compensation Policy
- Equality & Diversity Policy
- Probity Guidance
- Lettable Standard

5 Governance

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| Effective From: | 05/09/2019 | Expires: | 05/09/2022 |
| Policy Owner: | Regional Director – Hampshire & Wiltshire | | |
| Policy Author: | Policy Officer | | |
| Approved by: | Customer Community Network | | |
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