

## 1 Scope

- 1.1 This policy details how we effectively manage Aster Group homes, shared communal areas, grounds, garages and the environments around them to ensure that our neighbourhoods are safe and well-maintained places to live.
- 1.2 It sets out our approach to the planning and delivery of neighbourhood management and how we will involve our customers to create stronger and safer communities.
- 1.3 Neighbourhood management relates to the planning, monitoring and maintenance of services that include Aster's:
  - ❖ Grounds, gardens, and trees
  - ❖ Playgrounds
  - ❖ Communal repairs
  - ❖ Cleaning and caretaking
  - ❖ Communal bin stores, bike sheds and mobility stores
  - ❖ Environmental anti-social behaviour management
  - ❖ Garages and parking spaces
- 1.4 Aster Group has a diverse range of neighbourhoods with shared external or internal areas, land, and facilities. The individual characteristics and requirements will influence how we manage different neighbourhoods.
- 1.5 This policy applies to those who live and work in Aster Group communities.

## 2 Policy Statement

- 2.1 We aim to deliver effective and pro-active neighbourhood management. We expect customers to keep their homes, gardens and communal areas clean and tidy, for any repairs needed to be reported to us promptly, and for customers to avoid doing anything that will adversely affect environments that everyone shares and wants to enjoy. In return we will:
  - ❖ Carry out regular visits and site inspections of our neighbourhoods, garages, and communal areas to identify and subsequently address any areas falling below our acceptable standards.
  - ❖ Maintain clean and well cared for communal areas and neighbourhoods.
  - ❖ Allocate local neighbourhood enhancement budgets in consultation with residents to enhance and improve our neighbourhoods.
  - ❖ Ensure the neighbourhood services we deliver or procure are value for money for customers.
  - ❖ Work in partnership with customers and local authorities to ensure a high-quality environment for residents.
  - ❖ Attend specific partnership meetings to ensure we have an appropriate voice in the management of our neighbourhoods and communities.
- 2.2 Frequency of neighbourhood inspections are decided following a risk assessment and are carried out to ensure neighbourhoods are well maintained and to identify any issues that need to be addressed.
- 2.3 We will take a zero-tolerance approach to items in communal spaces and entrances/exits to blocks of flats. Customers will be put on notice that the item needs

to be removed, with a timescale for removal. If it is not removed by that date, Aster will arrange for the removal, and follow the Recharge Procedure where appropriate.

- 2.4 We work with customers, local authorities, statutory authorities, third party management companies and other landlords to resolve issues that are identified as not Aster's responsibility.
- 2.5 We will deal with abandoned vehicles as outlined in our Abandoned Vehicles Procedure.
- 2.6 We encourage the safe use of mobility scooters and electric wheelchairs. We will support customers who use these to manage any risks.
- 2.7 We are committed to managing environmental anti-social behaviour (environmental ASB) in our neighbourhoods and will respond to each case individually. Where environmental ASB is an ongoing problem, we will work with affected customers and local authorities to identify and plan preventative measures to tackle the cause.
- 2.8 We inspect our neighbourhoods to ensure that they are free from rubbish, weeds, that there is no graffiti, fly tipping or any health, safety or fire risks. Where the standard is not met, this will be recorded, action requested and checked for progress at the next inspection or earlier if the issue requires that.
- 2.9 When we believe that a customer's actions are the cause of environmental ASB, we will try to identify the perpetrator and we may take enforcement action against them. This may include re-charging them for the cost we have incurred to rectify the problem.
- 2.10 Where we are responsible for communal bin stores, we make sure they are suitable for the number of customers in our properties and are well maintained. Recycling, collection, and disposal of household waste is the responsibility of our customers and local authorities.
- 2.11 We will carry out grass cutting, maintain communal hedges, and ensure our grounds and paths are well-maintained. We'll make sure that trees on communal land don't present a danger to residents or possible risk of damage to buildings through our tree inspection programme and we will take action that we deem reasonable and proportionate.
- 2.12 We will ensure that grounds maintenance is carried out in line with agreed contractors' specifications.
- 2.13 We will inspect and manage garages, including the forecourts and areas around them. We will take necessary steps to ensure there is no environmental ASB, and that they are well maintained.
- 2.14 Neighbourhood enhancements are a way we make positive, tangible changes to our neighbourhoods. Examples of enhancements are mobility scooter stores, play areas, improving communal gardens or parking provision. All customers will be consulted about potential enhancement projects in their neighbourhoods, and we will consider their opinions and priorities.
- 2.15 We are committed to inclusivity and accessibility and will endeavour to provide our communication and policies in accessible formats and in other languages when requested or required.

### 3 Consultation, Monitoring and Review

- 3.1 We have consulted with our involved customers who have expressed an interest in giving us their views and helping us to develop our customer service policies, through the Customer Voice Team, as well as colleagues who are involved in the management of our homes.
- 3.2 Policy overview sessions will be delivered to relevant teams following implementation of this policy to ensure the content and responsibilities are understood.
- 3.3 Key performance indicators (KPIs) and Operational performance indicators (OPI's) and operational reporting will be utilised to monitor the effectiveness of this policy.
- 3.4 We will monitor customer results from Housemark Survey of Tenants and Residents (STAR) responses, customer feedback and lessons learnt from complaints.
- 3.4 The effectiveness of this policy will be regularly monitored, and the embedding of the policy scrutinised after 12 months by the *Customer Experience Panel*.
- 3.5 This policy will be reviewed every 3 years unless business need, regulation or legislation prompts an early review.

### 4 Related Policies and Procedures

- ❖ Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- ❖ Honesty Policy
- ❖ Complaints Policy
- ❖ ASB Policy
- ❖ ASB Procedure
- ❖ Health and Safety Policy
- ❖ Customer Voice Policy
- ❖ Abandoned Vehicle Procedure
- ❖ Neighbourhood Inspections Procedure
- ❖ Neighbourhood Enhancement Procedure
- ❖ Environmental ASB Procedure
- ❖ Recharge Procedure
- ❖ Mobility Scooter Procedure

### 5 Governance

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|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------|------------|
| <b>Effective From:</b>              | 19/08/2022                     | <b>Expires:</b>        | 19/08/2025 |
| <b>Policy Owner:</b>                | Regional Operations Director   |                        |            |
| <b>Policy Author:</b>               | Policy and Assurance Officer   |                        |            |
| <b>Approved by:</b>                 | <i>Customer Overview Group</i> |                        |            |
| <b>Delegation Matrix Reference:</b> | RO66                           | <b>Version Number:</b> | 4.0        |