

Aster Group is the overarching brand name of Aster Group Ltd and all of its subsidiaries.

1 Scope

- 1.1 Aster Group offers a range of tenancies. This policy applies to all customer of Aster Group except Shared Ownership customers.
- 1.2 Our tenancy agreements and terms of occupation comply with the Regulator of Social Housing Tenancy Standard 2012, and all applicable statutory and legal requirements.
- 1.3 We will offer a tenancy to customers who can provide evidence that they have UK citizenship or have the required immigration status with recourse to public funds and are eligible to live in the UK.
- 1.4 If there is any variance between this policy and individual tenancy agreements, the individual tenancy agreement takes precedence.

2 Policy Statement

- 2.1 We grant tenancies which are fair and compatible with the needs of individual households, the sustainability of the community, and the efficient use of our housing stock.
- 2.2 We have clear criteria for using and offering different types of tenancy, and for deciding what happens when a tenancy comes to an end. If a customer wishes to end their tenancy, they will need to let us know in writing, giving at least four weeks' notice, in line with the requirements of their tenancy agreement. We will provide customers with tenancy advice.
- 2.3 All tenants will be provided with a written tenancy agreement when moving into their home. This outlines the responsibilities of both Aster and our customers.
- 2.4 We do not offer tenancies for more than two tenants, unrelated occupants not in a relationship, or intergenerational families such as parent and child tenancies.
- 2.5 The types of tenures we offer are as follows:
 - Assured tenancy
We will issue an assured tenancy to any new or existing customer who have been assessed under the terms of the Lettings Policy or by agreement with the Local Authority.
 - Assured shorthold tenancy
We will issue assured shorthold tenancies to customers that are moving into intermediate rent accommodation, and for short-term accommodation to help our Local Authority partners prevent homelessness.

Aster Group is our overarching company brand and comprises the following companies and charitable entities. Aster Group Limited, Aster Communities, Synergy Housing Limited, East Boro Housing Trust Limited, Central and Cecil Housing Trust, Enham Trust, 55 London, Aster Foundation, Aster Living, Aster 3 Limited, Aster Homes Limited, Aster LD Limited, Aster Property Limited, Aster Solar Limited, Silbury Housing Holdings Limited, Silbury Housing Limited, Central & Cecil Innovations Limited, and Central & Cecil Construction Services Limited.

Assured and starter tenancies will be offered at either a social or affordable rent. A mixture of social and affordable rents will be applied on new builds delivered under the terms of Homes England Delivery Framework Agreement, along with an agreed percentage of re-lets.

Assured Shorthold Tenancies will be offered to our tenants in Specialist Supported Accommodation. These will be for a period of 6 months and tenants have the right to remain at the property until such time as the tenancy is brought to an end.

Such tenancies enable tenants to live in accommodation where the support provision is linked to their home to enable independent living. Under this agreement, tenants have exclusive occupancy of one bedroom and shared occupancy of communal facilities.

- Intermediate and Market Rent accommodation

An Assured Shorthold Tenancy (FTT or periodic): will be granted due to the non-secure nature of these tenures. This will be for a period of 6 months and after that time will continue until such time as it is brought to end, either by the tenant or the Trust.

- Starter tenancy

We may issue a starter tenancy for customers with a history of rent arrears, anti-social behaviour, or customers who don't have a record of a tenancy. We can also issue starter tenancies for supported housing. Unless action is taken to end the tenancy, this will become an assured tenancy after 12 or 18 months.

- Fixed Term Tenancies (Enham Trust only)

We will offer a Fixed Term tenancy to tenants who have successfully met the terms of their Starter Tenancy and may be issued for a period of up to 5 years. There may be exceptional circumstances where a shorter fixed term period is issued, this will not be any shorter than a two-year period and in these circumstances the probationary period will not apply. We will carry out a review of a fixed-term tenancies 12 months before the end of the fixed-term. The household circumstances will be considered in relation to their continued suitability for that property and one of the following actions will be taken: -

- A further fixed term tenancy will be issued for a period of 2-5 years.
- The tenancy may continue as a rolling periodic tenancy where there are any tenancy breaches.
- If a tenant's situation is such that they could access alternative accommodation elsewhere, we will not normally grant a new tenancy. Instead, we will offer advice and assistance and refer the tenant to the local authority.

- Licences

We will issue a licence for 16/17-year-olds which rolls into a starter tenancy upon them reaching the age of 18, this is because under 18's are not legally able to hold an interest in land. In certain circumstances, when deemed reasonable to do so, we will offer a 12-week licence for over 18's that rolls into a starter tenancy. We also offer licences where appropriate for short term accommodation.

- Licences (Care Homes)

For all registered care homes licences will be issued as standard practice. In accordance with the CQC registration, licences will be issued in the name of each individual entity.

- Excluded licences (Supported Housing)
We will award an Excluded Licence where the resident shares facilities and does not have exclusive use of the property. Such licences are used in supported housing schemes, where the support provision is linked to the accommodation and both are intended to be for a time limited period to enable move on, discourage dependence whilst enabling support to as many people as possible.

- Non-Social Housing Tenancies

Where Aster Group is acting as a managing agent for partner organisations, such as 55London or CCIL for non-social housing tenancies at market, affordable or commercial rent, the standard tenancy will be assured shorthold. At the end of this period the tenancy shall continue as an Assured Shorthold Statutory Periodic tenancy. There is no commitment to extend or renew these tenancies, or to provide alternative move on accommodation at the end of the fixed term.

- Emergency decants

Where it is necessary to decant a tenant from their home to enable emergency works to be carried out, a temporary licence will be used in these circumstances.

- 2.6 We will support customers to achieve a mutual exchange in line with our Mutual Exchanges Procedure. We will allow assignments and enable successions in line with our Assignments Procedure and Tenancy Succession Procedure.
- 2.7 We will work with and refer tenants to partner agencies in providing specialist advice and support around money and debt advice, access to benefits, care services etc to ensure tenancy sustainability.
- 2.8 Eviction is the option of last resort. We will only apply for court proceedings when all other options have been exhausted.
- 2.9 The Prevention of Social Housing Fraud Act 2013 was introduced to ensure that social housing is only used for those who need it. We will investigate reports of fraud from neighbours and other agencies and work closely with local authority partners and other agencies to tackle this. We will carry out tenancy audit checks. These checks will enable us to confirm who is in occupation, that the property is well maintained and the tenancy well managed. They are also an opportunity to identify any support needs or interventions to support tenancy sustainment.
- 2.10 We are committed to tackling all types of housing & tenancy fraud and will use various methods including but not limited to the NAFN (National Anti-Fraud Network), and we may subscribe to or use various agencies to achieve our aim. Our aim is to reduce and eradicate all social housing fraud that affects our business be it financial or administrative when managing our homes and other assets.
- 2.11 Action may be taken if there has been a breach of the tenancy agreement where it is reasonable and proportionate to do so. We will only terminate a tenancy and take possession action after all other alternatives have been explored.
- 2.12 If a customer passes away, we will accept a notice to end the tenancy from a next of kin and will work with them to return the property to Aster or investigate a succession request if the tenancy or circumstances allow this.

2.13 We will review tenancy agreements in line with legislation and ombudsman learning.

3 Monitoring and Review

- 3.1 In reviewing this Tenancy Policy, we consulted with involved customers who have expressed an interest in giving us their views on customer service policies, as well as colleagues who are involved in the lettings and 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 The effectiveness of this policy will be continuously monitored, and the embedding of the policy scrutinised after 12 months by the *Customer Experience Panel*.
- 3.4 This policy will be reviewed every 3 years unless business need, regulation or legislation prompts an early review.

4 Related Policies and Procedures

- 4.1 Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- 4.2 Honesty Policy
- 4.3 Complaints Policy
- 4.4 Lettings Policy
- 4.5 ASB Policy
- 4.6 Safeguarding Adults at Risk Policy
- 4.7 Safeguarding Children Policy
- 4.8 Rent and Other Charges Policy
- 4.9 Income Management Policy
- 4.10 Lettings Procedure
- 4.11 Starter Tenancy Procedure
- 4.12 Abandoned Property Procedure
- 4.13 Tenancy Management – Under 18's License's
- 4.14 Fixed Term Tenancy Procedure
- 4.15 Tenancy Assignment Procedure
- 4.16 Intermediate Rent Properties Procedure
- 4.17 MAPPA and High-risk assessment guidance
- 4.18 Mutual Exchange Procedure
- 4.19 Succession Procedure
- 4.20 Tenancy Checks Procedure
- 4.21 ASB Procedure and Appendices
- 4.22 Use and Occupation Procedure
- 4.23 Property Condition Procedure
- 4.24 Death of a Tenant with No Known Next of Kin Procedure
- 4.25 Eviction Procedure.

5 Governance

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| Effective From: | 05/02/2024 | Expires: | 18/06/2025 |
| Policy Owner: | Regional Operations Director | | |

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| Policy Author: | Policy, Training and Assurance Manager | | |
| Approved by: | <i>Customer Overview Group</i> | | |
| Delegation Matrix Reference: | RO55 | Version Number: | 3.1 |