

# Our strategy.

Everyone  
has a home.



## VISION

Everyone has a home

## CULTURE

The Aster Way will support us to develop an even fairer and more inclusive culture, which balances our social purpose and the need to work more commercially.

## PURPOSE

We improve people's lives. We provide safety and security through our reliable landlord services and we supply a wide range of housing options in response to the housing crisis. Our strengths are our people and ethical approach.

## Key Priorities...

CUSTOMER  
FOCUS

Providing customer-focused, easily accessible, good and safe landlord services by:

- Improving customer satisfaction
- Managing our homes proactively
- Using modern digital solutions
- Maximising our income and managing the impact of Welfare Reform

CHANGE  
AGENT

Being an agent for change through the activities we choose to do through the Aster Foundation by:

- Working across the priorities of digital and financial inclusion, health and wellbeing, and independent living
- Acting as a catalyst to change communities for the better

HOUSING  
OPTIONS

Building as many homes as we can offering a range of housing options by:

- Maintaining a strong programme of affordable rented homes
- Supporting housing development in rural communities
- Promoting shared ownership as a mainstream tenure
- Building more new homes through our land-led schemes
- Forging new strategic partnerships

STRATEGY  
GROWTH

Delivering our Corporate Strategy quicker and better through growth by:

- Increasing our financial capacity
- Enhancing our social impact
- Ensuring growing the business never compromises our existing services
- Supporting the delivery of new homes by working with partners and through mergers and acquisitions

FUTURE  
PROOF

Ensuring we are ready for the future by:

- Being known and trusted
- Being prepared
- Being connected
- Being digital
- Being the best we can be

# Customer focused.

Customer focused, easily accessible, good and safe landlord services.



## VISION

Customer focused, easily accessible, good and safe landlord services.

## PURPOSE

Our purpose is to improve people's lives, supporting people when they need it. We provide good, safe, reliable landlord services to our customers in rented, shared ownership and leasehold homes, working in partnership with others in local communities.

## Key Objectives...

## OUR CUSTOMERS

We will improve customer satisfaction based on the following principles:

- A blend of highly specialised and centralised teams, with a growing network of local, generic colleagues, delivering core landlord services to our customers
- Promotion of digital self-service for our high-volume transactions
- Seamless and efficient customer services across all of our operational services
- A clear focus on delivering our core responsibilities and obligations to a good standard
- A rebalancing of expectations, by clarifying and specifying our offer through customer engagement and involvement
- Work with others to provide specialist housing that meets the needs of older and vulnerable people, enabling customers to remain independent and safe in their homes

## OUR HOMES

We will manage our homes proactively so that we:

- Protect the health and safety of our customers and colleagues
- Maintain homes to a good and compliant standard
- Improve the energy efficiency of our homes and limit their impact on the environment
- Maximise the use of our land to deliver more homes and community facilities
- Identify poorly performing homes for disposal, to contribute to funding new developments and reinvestment in existing homes and neighbourhoods

## DIGITAL EVOLUTION

We will embrace modern digital solutions to provide better services, by:

- Simplifying how we work across our Landlord services
- Developing and launching 1st Touch/360, providing the platform for effective generic and mobile working
- Developing our multi-media Contact Centre, enabling the reduction of demand and the provision of insight and intelligence to greater understand the customer voice
- Developing access to Telecare technology and aids and adaptations
- Ensuring our customers have access to digital training and support

## INCOME MAXIMISATION

We will continuously refine how we manage the impact of Welfare Reform, so that we maximise our income by:

- Supporting customers to pay their rent and sustain their tenancies
- Encouraging financial independence in how we manage customer relationships
- Nurturing mutually beneficial relationships with others, such as the DWP and local authorities
- Making sure payment methods are accessible, quick and easy
- Promoting financial inclusion

# Positive impact.

Everyone has a home they can sustain, in a community they want to live in.



## VISION

Everyone has a home they can sustain, in a community they want to live in.

## PURPOSE

Investing in activities to enable local people in our communities to improve their own lives.

## Key Objectives...

SUPPORTING  
CUSTOMERS

Supporting our customers to sustain their tenancies, and improving life chances:

- Understand the drivers and reasons for tenancy failure, and adopt a targeted, collaborative approach to supporting customers to successfully sustain their tenancies
- Invest in digital skills training and helping customers to get online
- Provide a range of initiatives and support to enable longer term financial independence, including benefit and welfare advice and improving access to employment and training
- Improving social inclusion through increasing work to reduce the homelessness crisis, and providing homes and support for those who need it

INDEPENDENT  
LIVING

Enabling our customers to live as independently and as long as possible in their homes:

- To better understand barriers to independence and the impact of this on Aster and our customers
- Work with partners to address a range of exclusion problems, and use targeted evidenced based research to assist with wellbeing, physical and mental health, healthy life expectancy, financial security and social connections
- Deliver positive activities within our sheltered and extra care schemes, promoting health and wellbeing and reduced isolation

FUTURE  
WORKFORCE

Helping to create and sustain the workforce of the future:

- Develop skills within our communities to ensure that we maximise our economic and social impact, and create local homes and local jobs for local people
- We will enable our communities to grow and learn to support employment outcomes
- We will work in partnership with others to reduce unemployment and skills shortages in our local communities through targeted work in areas of need

THRIVING  
COMMUNITIES

Creating a lasting legacy by enabling our communities to thrive:

- Targeted local interventions to improve satisfaction with neighbourhoods
- Working with partners to implement scalable solutions to prevent the negative impact of social problems on vulnerable customers
- Deliver a volunteering programme which develops people and communities, delivering projects which deliver both business and community impact

# Building homes.

To build as many homes as we can through a range of housing options to support the vision 'everyone has a home'.



## VISION

To build as many homes as we can through a range of housing options to support the vision 'everyone has a home'.

## PURPOSE

That Aster actively contributes to solving the housing crisis through maximising the number of homes we can build recognising that strong partnerships and a positive cultural approach is integral to our success.

## Key Objectives...

## OUR PRIORITIES

We will:

- Raise Aster's external profile as a developer and build relationships making us the developer partner of choice
- Influence key stakeholders to maximise the value Aster can gain from Government policies which promote home ownership
- Continue to promote shared ownership as a mainstream tenure
- Monitor the housing market and develop our product offer to be able to respond to a change in market conditions and mitigate risk
- Continue to support housing development in rural communities through Aster's corporate social responsibility
- Pursue strategic partnerships with our LA partners as they are offered more opportunities to develop homes through the lift of the Borrowing Cap
- Retain our relationship with Homes England and give full consideration to longer term funding opportunities
- Ensure that all our homes meet an Aster agreed quality with appropriate measures to ensure on site supervision and technical support is provided to our project team

## THE ASTER OFFER

Our offer will be predicated upon:

- Increasing the number of homes developed on land we have acquired and land already in the Group's ownership (non S106 delivery)
- Pursuing larger land opportunities which are likely to include up to 30% OMS on each per annum
- Targeting key partners and build strategic relationships to ensure we create more homes to an Aster required standard
- Increasing the ratio of shared ownership homes up to 50% of programme by 2020
- Extending our Framework Agreement and invite a third partner to support our land led programme
- Reviewing our digital journey and look at introducing an IT based programme on schemes from planning through to handover
- Our offer will always be financially sound and based upon due diligence undertaken with our preferred partners to ensure secure the right sites at the correct price
- We will not be influenced by market competition from new players coming into the market (RPs/Las)

## BELIEFS &amp; ASSUMPTIONS

Our offer is built on the strengths we have within the business and assumes:

- There are sufficient funds and the structure of the business allows for the development of a range of tenure
- There isn't any change in the operating sales environment or we have an ability to mitigate the risk through additional grant funding
- The Group's existing policies on maximising its income through the existing active asset management strategy remains in place
- Planning policy will still allow for affordable housing to be provided through a S106
- Developers are still offering affordable housing through a S106 – viability tools not being implemented
- The Homes England investment programme continues to support Aster with the opportunity to secure grant funding for our rural programme and support our land led opportunities to ensure we can be competitive when bidding for sites



Adaptable.

Aster is ready  
for the future.



## VISION

Aster is ready for the future

## PURPOSE

Enabling transformation across the business, while ensuring colleagues have the technology they need to do their jobs, proactively communicating internally and externally and supporting our employees with a people-focused team.

## Key Objectives...

### BEING KNOWN AND TRUSTED

- Developing an evidenced based approach to becoming an influencer
- Creating wider brand awareness where it supports our corporate objectives
- Enabling our employees to have influence over decision making
- Creating an alumni where we remain connected with talented colleagues
- Building a future talent pipeline that's fit for the future and inclusive
- Ensuring we're proud of the experience we provide to our customers
- Develop a new approach to reward and recognition

### BEING DIGITAL

- Supporting the Digital Plan
- Ensuring all colleagues are comfortable working digitally
- Equipping our people with the right tools they need to do their job
- Collaboration with the Contact Centre for first line support

### BEING CONNECTED

- Connecting everyone with our Corporate Strategy
- Keeping colleagues connected with one another while working remotely
- Developing the intranet to support collaboration across the business
- Developing an approach to working more effectively as One Aster
- Increase connectivity through social events
- Ensuring colleagues have access to all the systems they need to do their job
- Creating a new Aster Welcome (onboarding)

### BEING PREPARED

- Understanding what work will look like in the future and how it impacts our business
- Preparing our colleagues for change and developing more resilience
- Addressing the needs of a multi-generational workforce
- Understanding the talents we have across the business

### BEING THE BEST YOU CAN BE

- Creating the right environment where coaching is our default management style
- Create a SMART working programme
- Continue to develop our wellbeing offer
- Using restorative practice as our default approach
- Having better insights about yourself and your colleagues to work better together

# Proactive.

Delivering our Corporate Strategy quicker and better through growth.



## VISION

Delivering our Corporate Strategy quicker and better through growth.

## PURPOSE

That Aster ensures long term sustainability by undertaking an innovative and holistic approach to growth that is centred on a strong offer both internally and externally and is supported by evidence led decision making.

## Key Objectives...

OUR  
PRIORITIES  
SET...

To ensure that growth can support our strategy and vision it is supported by a clear articulation of our priorities:

- Increasing our financial capacity – Our growth strategy supports building financial capacity within the Group for the long term, and we will make commercial decisions that ensure profit for purpose
- Development – Working with partners or through M&A growth can support delivery of more homes
- Social Impact – Growth supports our commitment to do things in an ethical way, and we consider a range of options to work in partnerships to enhance our social impact in our communities and beyond
- Services to customers – Successful growth which isn't detrimental to our existing services

OUR GROWTH MODEL  
IS PROMOTED BY OUR...

Our approach to growth is flexible and is grounded by lessons learned from our own experience and from across the sector. Our approach is multi-faceted and contains several key strands:

- Organic Growth – We will seek to grow the business through our ambitious development plan, we will improve and develop existing services and business areas to ensure long term, sustainable growth
- Growth through M&A – Our approach will be flexible and based on risk and reward, and will be underpinned by the agreed Aster Merger Code
- Growth through additional services – We will seek to expand and strengthen in areas of augmentation, whilst still considering opportunities for diversification
- Growth through partnerships – Proactively working with current and new partners to develop a range of approaches to partnership working, including strategic partnerships that unlock new capacity and geography
- Balancing risk and reward – Ensure that growth can clearly support one of our business priorities and strategy and enhance the financial and business plan. Our risk appetite sets out our parameters
- Core and non-core growth – Core growth is defined as adding overall capacity to the business plan, while non-core growth encompasses an holistic range of opportunities but should be grounded by financial viability and balancing risk and reward

ASTER  
OFFER  
IS DELIVERED  
THROUGH...

- Our offer is built on the strengths we have within the business, and our reputation in the sector and beyond. A Well Run Business – A strong focus on Governance and our G1 rating
- Our Financial Strength – We must harness our strong business plan
- Our Products and Services – The quality of the Aster product, and our sector leading expertise in specific products

- Our Approach – Our culture of openness and innovation
- Our Red Lines – We will not invest in an opportunity without the knowledge that it must contribute to the achievement of our strategy, we will ensure that any offer of investment does not have a negative impact on strategy elsewhere

The Aster offer should be flexed to incorporate different approaches. Specifically the agreed approach to small HAs and distressed businesses

INTERNAL  
CAPABILITY  
AND CAPACITY

To ensure that our approach to growth can be truly flexible and our offer to partners is clear and transparent we have built our capability and capacity internally:

- Mobilisation Resource – To ensure maximisation of opportunities, resource is required to deliver both the offer and the implementation of the project
- Networked Team – Draw on expertise from across the business
- Clear oversight and responsibility – Clear distinctions between M&A, core and non-core growth that enables oversight and accountability
- Business Intelligence – Build our capacity to use intelligence to lead on a more evidence based approach to growth
- Clear understanding – Demystifying growth, and creating a clear understanding from the Board downwards