

# Annual Report 2021/22

ongo



# Looking back on the year, a word from Steve Hepworth.

As we look back on another year, we saw lots of positives as we navigated through what was still a challenging time with the pandemic and restrictions in place. However it was great to see teams of colleagues being able to get back out doing events and activities in our communities.

You really can't beat seeing people in person and getting together, so that's definitely a big highlight for me from the last 12 months.

Investing in our homes is something else that is important to me, and it was positive to see £1million spent renewing the fire doors in our flats at Market Hill in Scunthorpe, along with installing hundreds of new kitchens and bathrooms and completing electrical rewires in some of our homes too.



Building new homes will always be a priority to us here at Ongo, we know there is an increasing need for affordable homes, so to be able to offer more of this to local people is crucial. A personal highlight was seeing Myos House open and residents moving in. It's a specialist dementia care scheme and the first of its kind in the area. To have somewhere purpose built where families can remain together is definitely something to be proud of.

Finally, we began our journey towards net zero. This means we're focusing a lot of time, investment and work into how we can be a more sustainable and environmentally friendly organisation. There's a long way to go and a lot to learn, but we have a great team of people leading on this, along with lots of our tenants who are passionate about the environment and us doing our bit.



This work will look at our buildings – including our homes and offices, our vehicles, the work we do with our partners and contractors and also how we can raise awareness and support others.

Throughout this report you'll see lots of other highlights and updates on all areas of the business so please take a read and I hope you find it interesting. Of course there are also areas we can improve on, and they're included in here – learning from things that haven't gone quite right or as well as they should have done is so important for us to help us be a better landlord to you. If you have any feedback or would be interested in getting involved with Ongo, please get in touch.

*S. C. Hepworth*

Steve Hepworth, Chief Exec

# Performance overview

Throughout 2021/22, we completed 94% of our Operational Plan, which is made up of the targets set out in our Corporate Plan. Our three strategies are:

- **Be a great landlord**
- **Offer quality homes**
- **Create opportunities**

To monitor our progress we have performance targets for each objective. This shows the level of service we're giving our tenants and keeps us on track to achieve our aims.

## Being a great landlord – at a glance

Indicator	2019/20 actual	2020/21 actual	2021/2022 actual	Target	Benchmark Peers top quartile	Benchmark Sector top quartile
% of tenants satisfied with overall landlord services*	91%	92.5%	74%	90%	86%	87%
% of tenants satisfied views are listened to and acted upon*	85.80%	88.6%	58%	90%	79%	73%
% of tenants satisfied their rent offers value for money*	92.40%	94.73%	81%	N/A	90%	76%
% of tenants satisfied with our repairs service*	81.50%	86.07%	69%	N/A	84%	81%
Current tenant arrears as % of debit (exc housing benefit)	1.79%	1.62%	1.41%	1.70%	2.94%	3.38%
% of rent loss from lettable empty homes	0.99%	1.12%	1.17	1.10%	0.89%	0.96%

## Offering quality homes – at a glance

Indicator	2019/20 actual	2020/21 actual	2021/2022 actual	Target	Benchmark Peers top quartile	Benchmark Sector top quartile
% of tenants satisfied with their neighbourhood as a place to live	84.20%	87.27%	73%	90%	86%	86%
% of tenants satisfied with the quality of their home	91.60%	92.07%	77%	N/A	84.38%	90%
% of tenants likely to recommend Ongo Homes to family or friends	63.80%	64.43%	21%	N/A	47.60%	44%
Investment into existing housing stock	£4,809k	£5,945k	£6,085k	£120m over 10 years	N/A	N/A
Number of new build homes delivered	134	179	213	N/A	118	204

## Creating opportunities – at a glance

Indicator	2019/20 actual	2020/21 actual	2021/22 actual	Target
Number of people accessing employment support	721	780	965	700
Number of people gaining sustainable employment	181	162	217	180
Number of young people engaged in one-to-one mentoring	128	112	116	100
Number of new apprenticeships	50	27	31	36
Total invested into community/creating opportunities projects	£1 million	£1.02 million	£1.03 million	£1.03 million

# An update from our Board

## Risk management and compliance

Our risk management framework (which follows principles of ISO 31000 standard) provides a clear and robust approach to managing risk, and a structure to integrate risk management into all aspects of Ongo activity. The aim is to protect our assets, comply with all relevant laws and regulation, successfully achieve our Corporate Plan and create a truly vibrant and resilient organisation.

Our risk appetite is reviewed and set by Board, as high-level statements which sets the tone for risk taking. Detailed statements are then provided as a guide for decision making to ensure we do not take risks outside of our agreed boundaries.

To ensure we understand the effect of risk on our business plan, we use possible scenarios taken from our strategic risk register. Our Board has an active role in this. Following the modelling of multi-variate scenarios on the business plan, we consider the mitigating actions that could be taken to recover the situation and return the business plan to a financially viable position. Our Asset and Liability Register is vital in understanding our options.

Our principal risks are ultimately owned by our Board and monitored through our strategic risk registers. Strategic and emerging risks are discussed at each Board meeting thoroughly.

Audits also take place to review procedures and make improvements where necessary. These are monitored by the Group Audit and Risk Committee.

## New members

Our Board members are appointed on their skills and abilities. Our current members have been with us since at least January 2020, with one new appointment made during the last year to our Audit & Risk Committee. Our new member, Martin, brings skills as a qualified accountant with financial, risk management and governance experience in private, public and third sectors. He is an experienced Board member with professional experience of working as a Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Corporate Services.

We ask our members to update their skills profile as part of their appraisals and use that information to help us build up a succession plan for future appointments and help recruit to the skills we need to run our business well. Diversity of our Board is something that is very important to us. Find out more about this on page 19.

## Statement of Compliance against National Housing Federation Code of Conduct

We have adopted the National Housing Federation (NHF) Code of Governance (2020). We consider ourselves to be fully compliant except for 3.7.3 and those areas mentioned below.

Section 3.7.3 sets maximum tenure as normally being six years. A succession plan has been agreed for the Board with the aim to eventually meet the tenure of six years. To avoid several Board members leaving at the same time risking a loss of experience and skills, a staggered approach has been agreed. This sees some members stay beyond their six-year term to provide a period of stability as we continue to embed our new governance structure.

We do not have any joint ventures within the group so section 2 is not applicable. Sections 1.6.6, 1.6.7 and 3.4.5 apply to Ongo homes only which is fully compliant with these sections. They do not apply to Ongo partnership, Ongo communities, Ongo recruitment, crosby brokerage, Ongo commercial, Ongo roofing, Ongo heating & plumbing, Ongo home sales or Ongo developments.

Ongo home sales & Ongo developments do not comply with section 3.3.2 regarding Board size between five and 12 members. The Board for these companies is set at four and this was agreed by Ongo homes and Ongo partnership Boards (parent entities) as part of the external review of our governance arrangements.

To find out more about our Boards, go to: [ongo.co.uk/Board](https://ongo.co.uk/Board)



# Focus on – be a great landlord



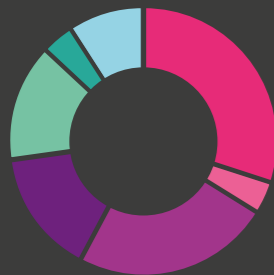
Our aim is to go from being a good, to a great landlord. We want to not only meet the expectations of our tenants, but exceed them with all the services we provide. To do this, we learn from the times we didn't quite get it right, and listen to all the feedback we receive.

## Your safety is our priority

Keeping you safe in your home and community is our number one priority, and we're pleased to be able to report on the following safety measures in 2021/22:

- Gas safety checks complete: 100% of all homes
- Asbestos surveys completed: 100% of homes (with asbestos in, built before 2000)
- Fire alarms tests in high rise blocks and communal areas: 100%
- Legionella tests completed: 100% (high rise blocks, sheltered/retirement schemes, offices and requests made)

## How your rent is set and spent



- Staffing, office and general running costs **29.3%**
- Service charge costs **4%**
- Maintenance and upkeep of homes **24%**
- Investment in existing homes **13.3%**
- New homes **17%**
- Communities projects **2.2%**
- Interest, unrealisable charges and other charges **10.2%**

## Our homes in numbers



Total number of homes:

**10,280**



Number of homes let:

**775**



Number of homes sold through Right to Buy or Right to Acquire:

**75**



Number of mutual exchanges:

**28**

## Tenancy management

1,414 new anti-social behaviour cases were reported, which is 204 less than last year. Of these, 56% of tenants were satisfied with how their case was dealt with, a decrease from 78% last year. This is a key focus for us to improve going forward.

## Homelessness support

We have supported 100 clients (across Scunthorpe and Doncaster) in total in the last year who were homeless or at risk of losing their home, with our occupancy rate above 90%.

- Engaging in education, volunteering or training – 19
- Supported to secure employment – 9



# Focus on – offer quality homes

We aim to provide quality homes at all times. This means building new homes to a good standard, and investing in and improving our existing ones.

## Repairs and maintenance

We carried out 27,231 jobs in 2021/22, with 97% of emergency or urgent repairs being completed on target.

We saw 81% of tenants feeling satisfied that their repair was done right first time, with 87% happy with the quality of their repair. 97% is the target, which demonstrates an improvement is needed. We aim to not only meet customer expectations, but exceed them so this is something we are working hard on improving.

## Repairs and maintenance spend

Actual spend	Budget
<b>Repairs 20/21</b>	<b>Repairs 20/21</b>
£3,736,576	£3,171,832
<b>Repairs 21/22</b>	<b>Repairs 21/22</b>
£4,424,000	£4,041,081



27,231

jobs carried out in 2021/22



219

new homes

## Improvement work

We've spent over £6million on investment work during this time, with over 22% of our tenants having planned improvement work in their home. This is a slight increase from 20% last year.

One large project and highlight for us includes spending £1.9million at Market Hill on replacing roofs and upgrading fire doors.

## New homes

We've added 219 new homes to our portfolio in the last 12 months, and started on site on 71 more. These include affordable rented, shared ownership, rent to buy and homes for outright sale, along with acquiring 111 properties in Lincoln.

These homes provided retirement living, opportunities to get onto the property ladder and above all, a safe and secure place for families to call home.

Myos House, our dementia care scheme, was just one of the developments completing this year. It's made up of 25, modern two-bedroom apartments and specially designed, spacious communal spaces for residents to socialise and relax.



Each year we invest around

**£1million**

in projects and programmes to improve our communities



# Focus on – creating opportunities

Each year we invest just over £1million in projects and programmes to improve our communities and provide local people with opportunities to thrive. For every £1 we spent in 2021/22 we saw £14.44 of Social Return on Investment.

We also secured £667,342 of additional external funding.

Our additional funding meant we could introduce huge new projects including Kickstart, a government funded scheme, to get 91 young people into paid work placements. To date we've worked with over 30 local companies.

965 people were supported through our Ongo Journey to Work, more than 200 over our target. This included training, CV building and mental health support. We also supported 116 young people with mentoring, which is slightly above our target of 100.

## Mental health support

Endeavour, our programme to support disadvantaged people, focusing on mental health issues and barriers to work began. We have a number of programmes to offer this kind of support, in the last 12 months we've helped 298 clients, up from 244 last year.



**116**

young people supported with mentoring during the last 12 months



**965**

people were supported through our Ongo Journey to Work





Listening to you and making sure you're involved in key decisions is crucial to us, that's why we have so many opportunities to get involved.



# Involving you

## Some key highlights include:

- Community Voice (CV), which is our recognised, main tenant body, has responsibility for holding us to account and has decision making authority on customer facing policies. During 2021/22 they approved the Customer Engagement Framework, our Complaints Policy, the Tenure Policy and many more. They also influenced proposals for MyMove.
- The Resident Scrutiny Panel recommended that guidance was updated on the Property Permissions process which was approved and implemented.
- The Digital Tenants Group influenced online services. This resulted in the list of repairs being made clearer and more added to the booking platform, along with improved navigation and accessibility of our website.

- Neighbourhood environment days, drop in sessions, We Care days and a huge number of events have been held across the region, engaging with hundreds of people.
- Tenant Environmental Champions have made such a difference that issues have reduced from 16 a month (on average) to just one.

We want to give our customers the chance to tell us what they think and to influence decisions that affect them. We have lots of opportunities to make sure this happens. If you're interested in any of these, go to:  
**[www.onggo.co.uk/involvedwithonggo](http://www.onggo.co.uk/involvedwithonggo)**

# Complaints

In the last 12 months we received 253 stage one complaints. We have improved our early intervention work when customers have expressed dissatisfaction and 223 customers received rapid resolutions to address their concerns quickly.

94% of our stage one complaints have been handled within 10 working days, and in line with the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code.

We have had four complaints investigated by the Housing Ombudsman. Three of those investigations showed that we had followed all of the correct procedures and the service given to our tenants were appropriate. One of the investigations found that we could improve on our infestation procedures and services to our tenants in this area.

71% of our complaints were upheld and we have worked hard to identify where the main areas are that we need to learn from, to ensure services keep improving.

 **253**

stage one complaints  
received

## You said, and what we're doing:

**When you report infestations, we needed to investigate more thoroughly and be clear on what the process is.**

We have updated the Tenancy Management policy to be clear on what areas of your home is our responsibility and are implementing a new infestations procedure to ensure we investigate an infestation issue thoroughly and can provide improved support and advice.

**Our contractors are not keeping you informed on the progress of your repair.**

We have implemented service level agreements to ensure timescales and communications are improved. This is being checked through our contract monitoring processes.



**94%**

of our stage one complaints have  
been handled within 10 working days

**When you have a damp and mould issue we don't always get to the bottom of the issue and it can reoccur.**

We are implementing a brand new damp and mould procedure and are working through all of the recommendations in the Housing Ombudsman's report on this issue. This means we will inspect every report thoroughly and that any remedial repairs are carried out, along with a period of monitoring to make sure the problem has been resolved fully.

We are also trialling new augmented reality (AR) technology to understand the severity of the issue at the first point of contact, with support to understand prevention measures.

# Equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI)

## Some of our key achievements:

- Successful delivery of Unconscious Bias training to Board members, Leadership team, members of the EDI Steering Group, managers, front-facing teams and our involved tenants by the Housing Diversity Network
- A dedicated statement from our Board with an objectives roadmap of where we are and where we are going, reinforcing our commitment from the top
- Colleagues and our EDI Steering Group were shortlisted for awards at the National Centre for fairness, respect, equality, diversity, inclusion and engagement (FREDIE) Awards
- Achieved 85% of our FREDIE action plan for the 2021/22 financial year

## Focus for the future:

- Be accredited again for Leaders in Diversity 2022
- Produce disability and race pay gap reports in addition to our annual gender pay gap reports
- Remain one of the top 50 organisations to work in the National Centre for Diversity's top 100 list
- Ensure all customers in all areas that we operate are able to access our services and for all voices to be heard

## Diversity of our Board

Diversity profiles of Board members were compared to our tenant base and the North Lincolnshire and Yorkshire and Humber Census 2011. This identified under representation in terms of ethnicity, disability and age. We are taking steps to improve this and have joined forces with Housing Diversity Network (HDN) to run a Board Trainee Programme designed to recruit individuals from under represented groups, giving them the support, skills and encouragement to be able to apply for future Board member roles. We have targeted adverts to our current tenants and ethnic community networks to try and find a Board member with lived experience. It's important we hear our customer's voice and having somebody with experience of social housing really helps bring a different point of view to discussions. Here are some more figures:

- The Board are mainly in the 45-59 age bracket (58%), which is higher than colleagues in general (33%) and of the local population (26%)

- No Board members consider themselves to be disabled
- The majority of people in North Lincolnshire and in Yorkshire and Humber consider themselves to be White British, which compares with the majority of Board, colleagues and tenants across all levels. However the under representation of ethnic diversity at Board level is something we are hoping to address in the coming years, with work ongoing to encourage this

## More info:

We have an EDI objectives roadmap which sets out where we are, and what we need to do to meet our targets, along with a Board statement outlining our commitment as an organisation. If you'd like to find out more about this, go to:

[www.ongo.co.uk/edi](http://www.ongo.co.uk/edi)



# Ongo in numbers

## Value for money

We achieved savings of £1,856,000 meaning we exceeded our target for the year which was £809,000.

Some of the key savings made over the year include £552k saved when tendering for our roof repair and replacement contract and our plumbing and heating contract, and £620k of savings made on our utilities expenditure by fixing our contract rates when the market was extremely low.

You can take a look at our full Value for Money Statement by visiting [ongo.co.uk/valueformoney](https://ongo.co.uk/valueformoney)

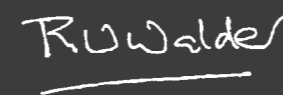
## Statement of comprehensive income for the year ended 31 March 2022

	Note	2022 £'000	2021 £'000
<b>Turnover</b>	3	<b>49,156</b>	47,691
Cost of sales	3	<b>(103)</b>	(220)
Operating costs	3	<b>(38,967)</b>	(35,954)
Surplus on sale of fixed asset housing properties	3, 10	<b>1,991</b>	1,149
<b>Operating surplus</b>	3, 6	<b>12,077</b>	12,666
Other interest receivable and similar income	11	<b>102</b>	74
Interest payable and similar charges	12	<b>(4,629)</b>	(3,707)
Other finance costs	12	<b>(243)</b>	(88)
Gift aid		<b>191</b>	681
Movement in fair value of investment properties	16	<b>15</b>	(20)
<b>Surplus on ordinary activities before taxation</b>		<b>7,513</b>	9,606
Taxation on surplus on ordinary activities	13	<b>(44)</b>	(43)
<b>Surplus for the financial year</b>		<b>7,469</b>	9,563
Actuarial (losses)/gains on defined benefit pension scheme	26	<b>10,459</b>	(8,166)
<b>Total comprehensive income for year</b>		<b>17,928</b>	1,397

## Statement of financial position at 31 March 2022

	Note	2022 £'000	2021 £'000
<b>Fixed assets</b>			
Tangible fixed assets – housing properties	14	<b>220,877</b>	202,146
Tangible fixed assets – other	15	<b>2,679</b>	2,850
Investment properties	16	<b>1,525</b>	1,510
Investments – other	17	<b>30</b>	30
Investments – subsidiaries	17	<b>77</b>	100
		<b>225,188</b>	206,636
<b>Current assets</b>			
Stock	18	<b>20</b>	379
Debtors – receivable within one year	19	<b>2,740</b>	3,721
Debtors – receivable after one year	19	<b>–</b>	900
Cash and cash equivalents		<b>72,216</b>	77,505
		<b>74,976</b>	82,505
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	20	<b>(20,115)</b>	(10,863)
<b>Net current assets</b>		<b>54,861</b>	71,642
<b>Total assets less current liabilities</b>		<b>280,049</b>	278,278
Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year	21	<b>(161,324)</b>	(167,509)
Net assets excluding pension liability		<b>118,725</b>	110,769
Pension liability	26	<b>(1,766)</b>	(11,738)
<b>Net assets</b>		<b>116,959</b>	99,031
<b>Capital and reserves</b>			
Income and expenditure reserve		<b>116,959</b>	99,031
		<b>116,959</b>	99,031

The financial statements were approved by the Board of Directors and authorised for issue on 25 August 2022.



**R Walder**  
Director



**M Kenya**  
Director



**S Hepworth**  
Chief Executive



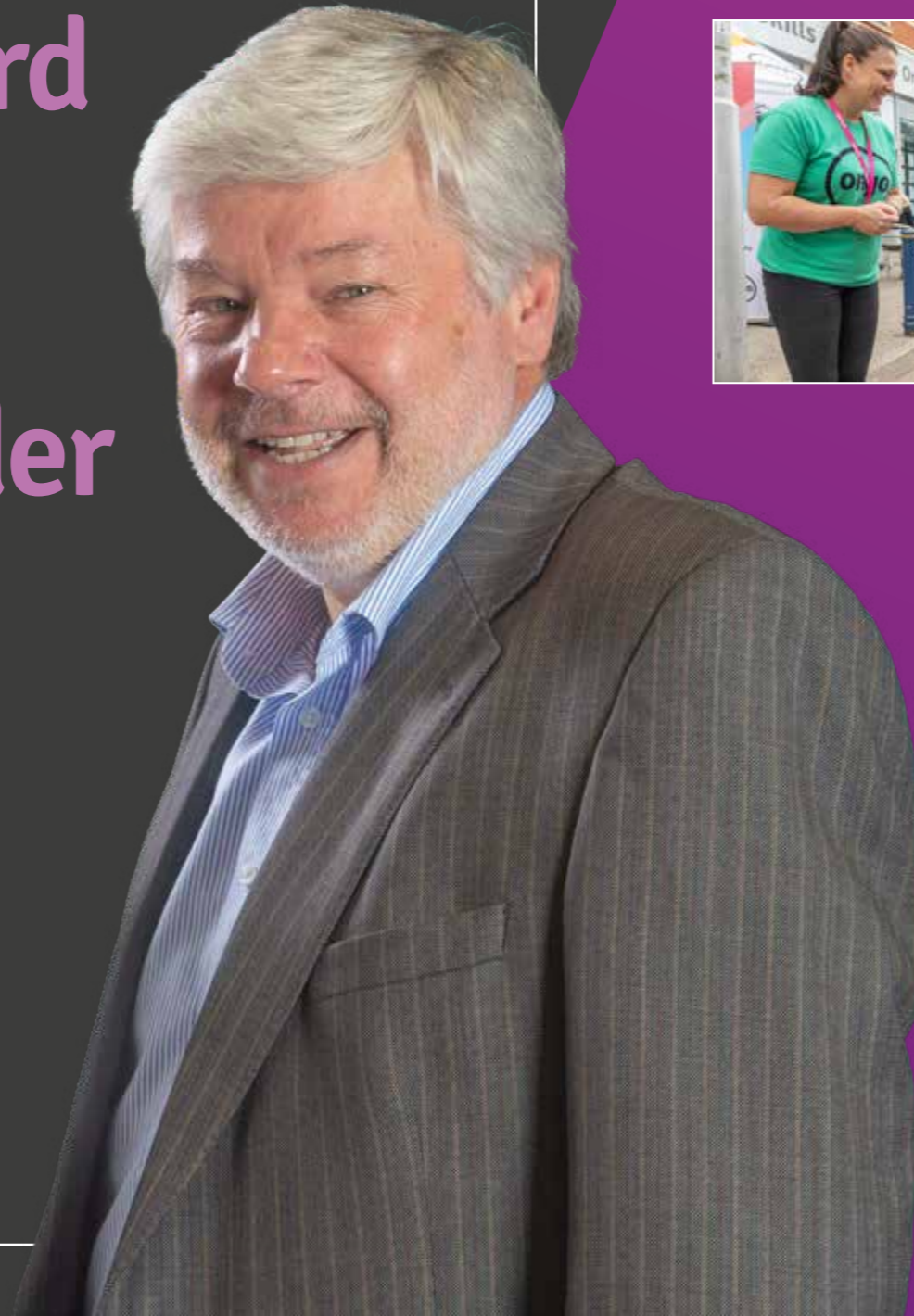
**J Sugden**  
Company secretary

The tables included are an extract from our financial statements and their explanatory notes.

# Looking forward to the year ahead, a word from Bob Walder

**Over the next 12 months, we're aiming to return to the top G1 rating for our approach to governance. We've been working closely with the Regulator of Social Housing to fulfil our action plan. They completed an "in depth assessment" recently and we expect to find out this financial year whether we will return to a G1 status.**

Continuing our journey to net zero is another priority for us next year. We've got a plan in place which has the full backing of the Board and Leadership team here at Ongo, so it's all systems go to get our plan in action and start seeing some real differences.



The cost of living crisis is something else at the forefront of our minds going forward. We know it's going to be a difficult time for everyone and we want to be able to support tenants, customers and colleagues wherever possible. If you're worried or concerned about your finances please get in touch with our dedicated teams that are on hand to offer guidance and advice.

We're also going to be working hard to learn and improve as a landlord to offer the best services we can, and of course to learn from anything that doesn't go as well as it should. This involves our commitment to invest in our existing homes. This includes us launching smart home technology trials to see how we can use it to improve our homes, looking at smart devices, using portable sensors to identify issues such as damp

and mould and using virtual assistance to resolve some repair issues. Keep an eye out for more on this coming soon.

Finally, I'd like to thank all of our customers and colleagues for another successful year and I look forward to working with you all for the next 12 months.

A handwritten signature in white ink that reads 'R. Walder'.

**Bob Walder**, Chair of the Board



# Awards and accreditations

**Seeking accreditation is one way in which we check that our services meet the high standards that we always aim for. Here are some of them:**

- Investors in People
- Health & safety – CHAS
- Mindful Employer
- Disability Confident
- Which Trusted Traders
- RECC Renewal Energy Consumer Codes
- Trustmark
- Matrix Standard
- LiD (Leaders in Diversity)
- Cyber Essentials
- TPAS (tenant involvement)
- Construction line

# Thank you

for another hugely successful 12 months. None of this is possible without our fantastic, loyal and passionate customers and colleagues who work tirelessly to keep on improving, so that we can create communities we're proud to live, work and thrive in.

For more information,  
visit our website: **ongo.co.uk**

