

KEY NEWS



# FESTIVE CELEBRATIONS

Lots of seasonal events and community celebrations have taken place.

## Cost of living

The range of support available if you're struggling.

## Grab a saving

Some handy hints ready for the new year.



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## Grab a saving

Make the most of some simple ways to save you money.

Contact us

Online



ongco.co.uk  
enquiries@ongco.co.uk

 OngoHomes  
 @ongcoUK

Call us



01724 279900  
We record all calls for training and research purposes

My Home



Log in or register at:  
**myhome.ongco.co.uk**  
Or to download the app, search 'Ongo My Home' in your app store

WhatsApp





# A message from Chief Exec Steve

## Hi everyone,

Welcome to the final Key News of 2022. It's been another busy year focused on offering a range of support and opportunities, our net zero and smart home technology work, plus hosting events such as the Customer Conference and Ongo Carnival to bring people together.

2023 is going to be an exciting year, one in which we have lots of plans to support you, offer you a range of opportunities and invest to improve the services that you receive.

Support is especially important now with the cost of living rise and general price increases. One of our main priorities is to ensure all the relevant help and guidance is available for you, check out pages eight and nine for more on how we can help.

After the restrictions of previous years, it has been nice to get back out into communities this year. We recently held a We Care Day at Winterton where fencing was painted, litter collected and info given out about local support. Fruit and vegetables were also planted for local volunteers to grow. We're planning lots more for next year so keep a lookout on our website and social media.

It was also heartening to see some of our inspiring volunteers featured on a **BBC Radio Humberside feature** of the Growing and Learning project.

[Click here](#) to learn more and how you can get involved.

**I wish you a Merry Christmas and a happy New Year.**

**Happy reading!**

*Steve*

# Spreading seasonal cheer

**Over 60 residents enjoyed a fun-filled, festive afternoon at the annual Dine & Dance.**

A two-course lunch was accompanied by games and music along with the opportunity to meet people and make new friends.

Glonay Rayner, Haxey resident who attended, said: "I loved every moment. I'm very grateful for such an event that brings people together, extra things like a present given to everybody and transport being provided made sure nobody was left out."



[Click here to read more about the event.](#)



# Festive round-up

There's been lots going on to spread some Christmas cheer and support.

## Time for celebration

Many tenants have been involved in Christmas celebrations, bringing local communities together.

Residents from our dementia care scheme, Myos House, visited Brigg Garden Centre for a Christmas dinner.

Dorothy Sherman, resident, remarked: "It was a lovely day out as a group and to meet other tenants' family members. The Christmas displays were amazing, and the meal was wonderful too."

They also held a festive wreath-making session and a Christmas afternoon with a choir, cake stall and raffle.



## Providing for those in need

The Arc and Viking Centre have put on Christmas lunches for people who may have otherwise spent the festive period on their own.

// **It was a lovely gesture to bring people together and to get into the Christmas spirit. It was very nice and I really enjoyed the whole occasion.**  
Berita, tenant //

The Arc have also offered a 'Coat Swap' initiative for those in need, while the Viking Centre have partnered with a local company allowing people to fill a bag of essential items for only £1.

Make sure to follow [The Arc](#) and [Viking Centre](#) for more on what they can offer you.



## Bringing everyone together

Several retirement schemes have hosted their own Christmas parties, including Wells Court (Broughton).

Local community groups offered a range of events throughout December including a Santa's grotto, card-making sessions and afternoon teas.

[Click here to check out all the community festive events that have taken place.](#)

We want to feature what's taking place in your community:





# Investing in you

If you need support, please contact us and we will review what potential funds we may be able to access for you.

## Help and support

With the increasing cost of living and inflation currently at over 11%, we understand the financial pressure that this will place on you.

That's why we are committed to being here for you. Whether it is offering personalised guidance, helping to access grants and any benefit entitlement, or working with local partners, we will make sure all relevant support is in place to help you.

For example, we recently secured some funding to employ a member of staff at the local **Citizens Advice Bureau** specifically for supporting our tenants and providing personalised energy advice.

We have also teamed up with HSBC to host some budgeting sessions and the **Hull & East Yorkshire Credit Union (HEYCU)** for exclusive offers.

**There is a specific section for support available to you depending on where you live. [Click here](#) for all the details.**

## Budgeting advice

There will be some sessions held on 9 and 30 January, 27 February and 27 March.

They will be led by HSBC at our Employment Support office (Cole Street, Scunthorpe, DN15 6QY), 10am – 11am on each day.

**Check out what Kim thought:** “It was really useful, I particularly liked how the money-saving techniques were tailored to my own situation.”

“It covered a lot of helpful subjects such as working out your income, prioritising the most important bills, looking for cheaper deals, budgeting apps plus practical things like cheaper subscriptions and cooking on a budget.”

**Email [Employment Support](#) or send a message on [Facebook](#) to book your place.**

**Make sure to also follow social media accounts such as [Live Well North Lincolnshire](#) and [North Lincolnshire Libraries](#) for free support and events.**



## Winter safe spaces

Welcoming places for people to keep warm, get food and refreshments plus take part in activities have been available in recent months.

The Arc (Westcliff), Viking Centre (Barton) and our Cole Street office (Scunthorpe) have each hosted these warm zones which has seen over 200 attend.

**Clarice, tenant, said:** “This was a fantastic idea, I was able to have a lovely hot drink and my children enjoyed their time playing.”

**[Click here to learn more and find further support.](#)**

## Rent update

Government consultation on a proposed social housing rent cap from April 2023 has taken place, and they decided that all social housing rents will not increase by more than 7%.

We held several focus groups to get your views and, based on the feedback, we will be deciding in January how much the cost of renting a home will increase by.

It will mean we can continue investing to improve services, and all relevant support will be available to you.



If you are struggling, please get in touch with us:

[myhome.ongo.co.uk](http://myhome.ongo.co.uk)

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

[Enquiries](#)

[Ongo Homes](#)

[@ongoUK](#)

01724 279900 (option 2)



# Home improvements

## What we are doing and investing to improve services

We are committed to resolving any current and reducing potential damp & mould issues. Lots of work has already taken place and will continue including:

- ✓ Reviewing all active reports of damp & mould
- ✓ Investing in extra resources such as more tradespeople and targeted training
- ✓ Implementing a new risk-rating system so the most severe cases can be prioritised
- ✓ Working with specialist contractors such as Westlinks and EnviroVent
- ✓ Creating a new damp & mould policy which our main tenant group, Community Voice, will discuss and vote on
- ✓ Using visual assistance to see the extent of the issue and ensure swifter resolution

If you reported a damp & mould issue in the past and either feel it wasn't resolved or haven't received an update, then please contact us. Don't suffer in silence.

We have also invested in more staff for our Customer Experience team to reduce call-handling times and in Maintenance so more repairs can be completed and in a quicker timescale.

## Future work

We have appointed a new Decent Homes contractor to continue the regeneration of existing homes.

The contract begins from January and will ensure that a programme of kitchens and bathroom upgrades, among other areas, will be developed. Make sure to keep a lookout in your next Key News for a further update!



# New homes

## Close to completion

11 homes will soon be finished at Rowland Road (Scunthorpe).

They will be a mixture of two and three-bed houses, with four available through the **Rent to Buy scheme**. A range of modern features will be included, and the homes are due to be completed in March 2023.

## Regeneration underway

Work has started on site to transform Ashtree Close in Belton.

16 bungalows and houses will be built as part of the regeneration that has a target date of late 2023. Consultation took place with current residents to get their feedback, and tenant Louise Clark is looking forward to the progress.

She said: "These plans will improve the area and help to bring everybody close together in a sense of community."

## Plans announced

A proposal for 96 homes in Armthorpe, Doncaster, has received Board approval.

40 **shared ownership** properties are set to be included. The development will be completed in four phases over several years and will have many nearby amenities including access links to the M18.



Rowland Road, Scunthorpe



Ashtree Close site

Meeting a range of different needs is vital. This will be an ideal way to affordably get on the property ladder and live within a prominent area.

Martin Phillips, Development Manager

Check out the latest news on all our new builds by visiting: [ongo.co.uk/developments](https://ongo.co.uk/developments)



# A greener future

An update on the three pilot projects helping to improve homes, reduce wasted energy and save money.

## Switchee smart thermostats

Currently being fitted in 152 homes with air-source heat pumps, plus eight carbon neutral homes in Westcliff that we are building. This will allow tenants to control the temperature in the home and identify potential issues.

## Portable sensors

We have started installations at 70 homes in the following areas:

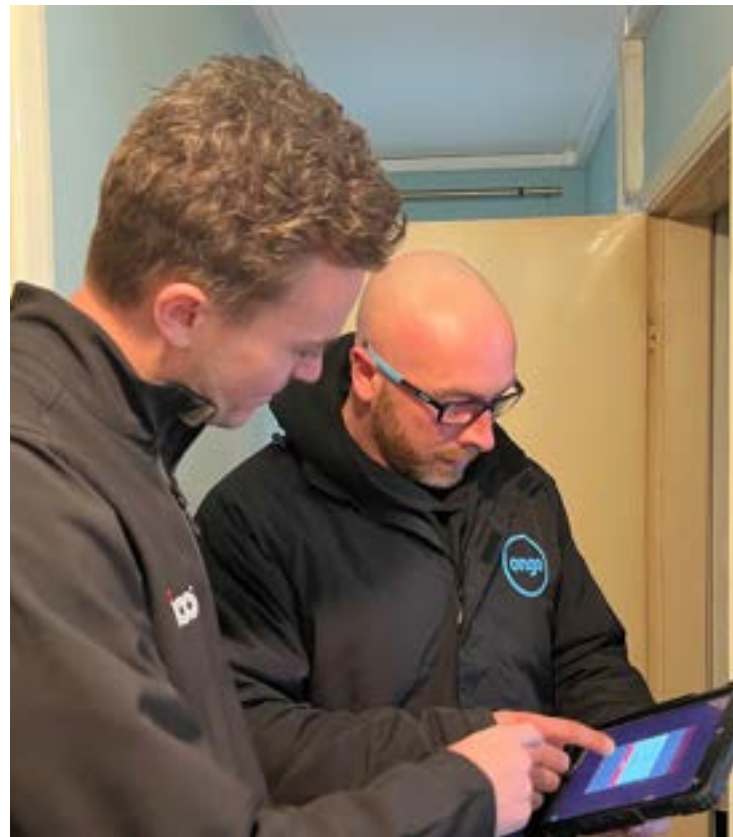
- Crosby
- Epworth
- Luddington
- Manor Farm estate
- New Westcliff

Additional devices are available for those with damp & mould issues. These sensors will help to proactively assist and resolve such issues, plus prevent future problems.

## Virtual assistance

Our teams continue to use the system which allows you to show an issue through live-video sharing and ensures it is sorted right first time.

Visit [our website](#) for further updates.



A tenant recently used this method: "I would recommend it to others as it speeds up the process. It helps to save a tradesperson attending to inspect."

This smart home technology work is just one part of our plans towards Net Zero and helping the environment.



Scan the QR code to learn more.

# New year, new you

## Employment and wellbeing support from your own home.

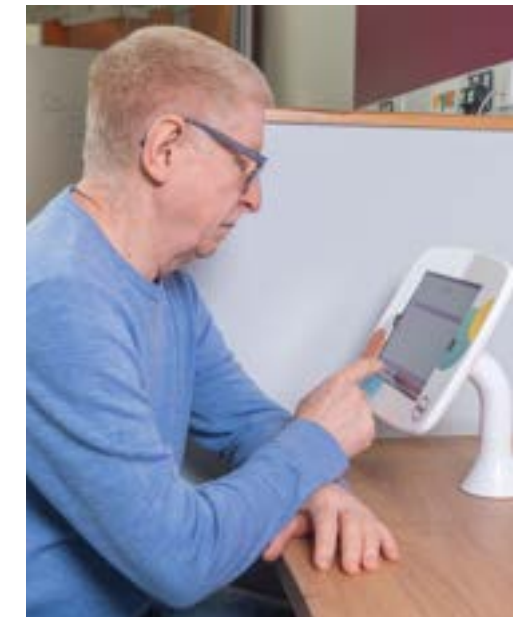
Not everybody can access services in-person, so we want to ensure they are available and inclusive for all.

We can offer a vast range of support which include remote options such as video services, social media, telephone and email. The help can be anything from mentoring and life-coaching to helping increase confidence, skills and opportunities.

**Check out Susan, a resident who has recently accessed support digitally for the first time:** "Anything digital used to scare me as that was my late husband's area, but I have recently started a Business and Admin course, plus basic IT training."

"It's giving me a lot more confidence, and I can't thank Emma (my Counsellor) enough. She has lots of patience and helps me with whatever I find difficult."

[Read more about Susan's success.](#)



Want to learn about how we can improve your skills and prospects?

Did you know? We have updated the Ongo Journey to Work to help you succeed. Scan the QR code to learn more:



- [ongo.co.uk](https://www.ongo.co.uk)
- [Employment Support](#)
- [Ongo Homes](#)
- 01724 279900 (option 6)



# Tenant takeover



Harry recently became involved in improving services for all and helping others.

### How long have you been a tenant for?

Since October 2020. I was born in a British military hospital before living in Germany for 33 years and then for two decades in Cyprus.

### How have you found your involvement so far?

I'm enjoying having a part in what Ongo is planning for now and the future. It's also been good to meet new people and see how we can all make a difference even if you don't have much spare time.

I work shifts but I like how there's a range of ways to get involved that fits in around your other commitments. This has opened my eyes to how much is available for us as tenants and how much of a say we can have in all the decisions that we are impacted by.

### What are you most looking forward to?

Developing in my role on both the **Community Voice** and **Tenant Inspectors** groups.

Being able to decide on all customer-facing matters, and inspect a range of services to make sure they're the best possible, puts tenants at the heart of everything Ongo does.

Scan the QR code to learn how you too can make a difference.












# Involved with Ongo

The group is open to all tenants and leaseholders. [Click here](#) to discover more.

## Community Voice

Your main tenant group has made decisions on the following tenant matters in 2022:

 <b>Influencing rent and financial support</b>	 <b>Tenant Satisfaction Measures</b>	 <b>Policies such as Tenancy Management</b>
 <b>A new Neighbourhood Standard</b>	 <b>Anti-Social Behaviour</b>	 <b>Decent Homes work</b>
 <b>Reviewing the four Customer Charters</b>	 <b>Smart home technology and net zero progress</b>	 <b>Building Safety</b>

### We need your help to Influence and improve

**The Resident Scrutiny Panel** investigate different service areas to make recommendations and improve the services available to you.

**The Property Services Panel** review the delivery of repairs, empty homes, neighbourhood services and new builds to monitor trends and influence improvements.

Interested? [Click here](#) to get involved.





# Grab a saving

Check out some useful cost-cutting tips:



**Review your subscriptions.** Cancel any that you don't use regularly and make sure to turn off the auto-renew option.



Download a budgeting app such as **Mint** that will help to prioritise your spending.



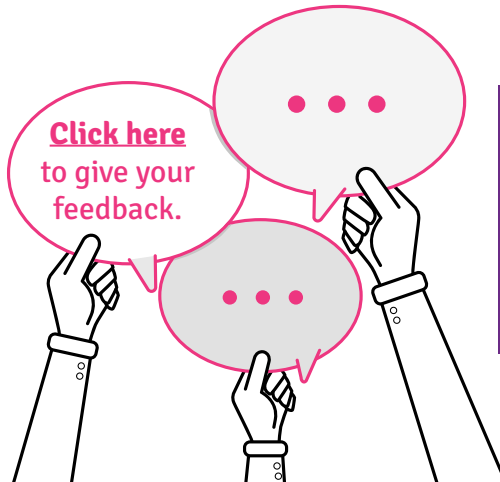
**Shop around and compare prices** from different providers to find the best deals on your phone, insurance and broadband.



Check out **our website** for more ways to save money and help the environment.



**Consider shopping seasonally.** For example, buy warmer-weather clothes in winter and vice-versa when prices tend to be cheaper.



We want to hear what you think about this edition.



Regularly check websites such as **VoucherCodes** and **Wowcher** for latest offers.

We are committed to being fair and respectful to all, giving you opportunities to engage and tailoring any support to your needs.

[Click here](#) for further info on how we have received the Leaders in Diversity accreditation.

Email [editor@ongo.co.uk](mailto:editor@ongo.co.uk) or message us on social media to let us know your top tips!

Keep up to date with our latest news:

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

 [OngoHomes](https://www.facebook.com/OngoHomes)

 [@ongoUK](https://twitter.com/ongoUK)

