

KEY NEWS



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New tenant Board members

Making decisions and being a part of positive change.

Carnival success

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Contact
us

Online



ongo.co.uk
enquiries@ongo.co.uk
f OngoHomes
t @ongoUK

Call us



01724 279900
We record all calls for training and research purposes

My Home



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

WhatsApp



A message from Chief Exec Steve

Hi everyone,

This edition is an Annual Report special focusing on our 2021/22 performance, looking at what we achieved but most importantly how we can improve. **Check it out:**



The rising cost of living is affecting everybody, but there is lots of support in place to help you. It's crucial that you contact us if you are struggling as we can assist with budgeting, referring to potential grants and we also work closely with other support networks. Take a look at pages six and seven for all the details, including how we want your views.

Such circumstances made the return of the Ongo Carnival, where everything was free, even more important. It was amazing to see so many of you there having a great time and giving something back to the community in such a way made me very proud. It's why we will continue to invest over £1 million each year in community events and projects. More info about the day is on pages eight and nine.

I'm also delighted to welcome the new Board members and trainees, including Kacper and Hayley who are tenants. They will bring invaluable insights and experience of living in an Ongo home, and their role will be vital in shaping how we invest in, and support, you and your community.

Happy reading!

Steve

I did a live Q&A in September to answer any Ongo-related questions you had. Watch it back on our Facebook page and keep a lookout for further sessions in the future.



Full of life

"I was in a bad place – I felt worthless, experienced severe mood swings, closed my business, had no confidence and thought I was letting my kids down. But then everything changed..."

Nick, 47, has received a range of financial and employment support to turn his life around. He said: "I did volunteer training and various courses which improved my skills, went on wellbeing trips to rediscover my confidence with others, and I'm hoping to start on the **bike and allotment projects soon**."

"I'm also due to start a Teaching Assistant course and have been offered a work placement at a local school. None of this would have been possible without the help I've had along the way – everything has been fantastic. Knowing they're here for me if I ever need help again in the future is extremely comforting."

He has written a couple of poems to show what difference the support has made.

Scan the QR code to hear a reading from Nick.



Rather than looking back, I'm now grateful for everything that I've got in my life.



Compared to the previous year...

108 more people received coaching and training

54 more were supported with their mental health

55 more found sustainable employment in 2021/22

Find out how we can improve your outlook:

ongo.co.uk/supporting-you

employmentsupport@ongo.co.uk

01724 279900 (option six)

Here to help you

We want to hear from you
We are due to launch a survey to understand the impact that the cost of living is having on you. Check our website and social media for more.

Check out the latest updates about the cost of living, what it means and how we can support you.

Setting the scene

The cost of living is increasing faster than at any time for the past 40 years, with inflation currently at over 10%.

Government consultation on a proposed social housing rent cap for April 2023 to March 2024, which would limit any potential rent increases to 3%, 5% or 7%, has been carried out and we have provided feedback. To enable this we have held in-depth discussions with our main tenant group, Community Voice, our Board plus our colleagues. We have considered both the positives but also the challenges a rent cap could bring. The results from the national consultation are due to be published over the coming weeks, so keep an eye out on our website and social media channels.

Our costs are generally going up by over 15%, meaning that we have less money in which to invest than before. This risks our 30-year business plan and our aims such as investing in existing homes, providing a range of services, support and opportunities, plus building more much-needed affordable housing for current and future generations.

Though your rent will increase next year, we remain more affordable than privately renting. On average it costs around £152.25 per week for a three-bedroom, private rent home in areas we have homes. By comparison our rent (including the increase) would amount to just over £100 for a social rent home (excluding service charges) and around £130 for a three-bed new build affordable home.



What work is taking place

We have established a working group to help address the impact on you, our colleagues and the organisation. They have so far looked into:

- ✓ **Assessing your situation at the start of a tenancy to ensure it is affordable and you have all the relevant advice and support**
- ✓ **Providing coaching and support on how to sustain a tenancy**
- ✓ **Linking to funding and grants available**
- ✓ **Working with other support agencies**
- ✓ **Other proactive interventions that we can support with**



A range of support

If you are struggling, worried or want some guidance, then please contact us at the earliest opportunity.

We are not here to judge – instead, we will understand your personal situation and ensure that all relevant support is in place to help you. We work closely with other agencies such as the Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) and can also signpost you to relevant funds and benefits that you could access.

Earlier in 2022 the government allocated a sum of £500,000 to support North Lincolnshire, which we worked with the CAB on. Another £500,000 was granted in October, and we are also working to secure other grants.



£719,575 of additional income was secured for tenants through our support services in 2021/22.

Scan the QR code to see how we can help you too.



Contact us today:

- myhome.ongo.co.uk
- ongo.co.uk
- enquiries@ongo.co.uk
- OngoHomes
- @ongoUK
- 01724 279900 (option 2)

Cause for Carnival celebrations

The 2022 Ongo Carnival, held in August, was the biggest and best yet with thousands coming along to enjoy the free event.

Following a two-year break, the sun shone on Manor Park in Scunthorpe as all savoured the vast range of games, activities, performances and information stands.

Lauren Brown travelled from Barton and said: "It was a fantastic day with so much on offer, I still can't believe it didn't cost anything. My kids really enjoyed themselves, learnt a lot and we were very grateful for an event like this after what it's been like for so many people in recent times. We can't wait for next year already!"

Scan the QR code
to read more



Check out the winner and
runner-up of our photo
competition from the day!



Let us know on our website and social
media pages what you would like to see
at the 2023 Ongo Carnival.

New Homes

Winterton work

Progress is being made on 40 homes in Winterton.

Based on Coates Avenue and due for completion in April 2023, 25 of the homes will be for rent with the remaining 15 available under the **Rent to Buy scheme**.

They will be a mixture of two and three-bed houses and bungalows with many modern, environmental features.

Scan the QR code to find out what these features will be.



Progress on site

12 new homes in Lea, Gainsborough are currently being built.






The Rose Gardens development will feature six two-bed homes for rent and six three-beds for **shared ownership**. They will be close to a growing town centre with a range of amenities including schools, shops, restaurants and regular transport links.

The homes will be handed over in several phases from January to May 2023.

Creating a greener future

Eight carbon neutral homes in Westcliff, Scunthorpe will be completed in early 2023.

The open-plan, family homes will aid in the reduction of energy costs for the resident through:

-  **Air-source heating**
-  **Electric vehicle charging points**
-  **Smart thermostats**
-  **Solar panels**
-  **Batteries to store electricity generated from the panels to help overall costs**

Scan the QR code to read about our environmental work.



Featuring the Coates Avenue development

// We're committed to being more sustainable, so building these homes and including environmental features in future builds is very important. **//**

Martin Phillips, Development Manager



Check out a video to learn more about the new homes that we are building!



Home improvements

Learn about what work is taking place to regenerate existing homes.

A new system

Tenants at Lincoln Court will now be charged for their own individual heating usage rather than paying a set rate. This will lead to a more efficient form of heating for the residents.

Temporary boilers are currently set up so that nobody is affected, and decoration will also be done in communal areas where work has taken place.

Market Hill and some retirement schemes have previously had this system installed. Full consultation took place with the scheme's residents, and work is due to be completed by January 2023.

Safety first

All fire doors at one of our high-rise blocks, Trent View House, have been upgraded.

Decorating has also been completed in communal areas to refresh the appearance. A new roof is due to be installed in the future.

Investment programmes

Roofline and gutter works have been completed at Queensway and Grange Lane North (Scunthorpe).

Ongoing work also continues installing new kitchens, bathrooms, roofs and boilers where they are most needed. A new Decent Homes contractor is due to be appointed for the kitchen and bathroom improvement works, and plans to increase the programme of replacement work are being looked into.

Visit our website and follow us on social media for further updates.



We invested **£6,673,632**
into current homes in 2021/22.

Check out more here:



Tenant takeover



John recently joined our main tenant group, Community Voice, and is enjoying being involved in making decisions.

How long have you been a tenant for?

Since December 2020.

What made you first want to get involved?

I attended the Customer Conference in June and realised that there were loads of volunteer opportunities which would allow me to use my experience in a worthwhile way.

What has been the best thing so far?

The diverse group of people that are involved. In the past I have sometimes felt that it is only certain types who can take part, but that's definitely not the case here – there's something for everyone.

What are you most looking forward to?

I have learnt an incredible amount already, met great like-minded people and I can see a very positive future – one where tenants continue to be at the heart of everything even more than before.

Why should others get involved?

Because you're able to not just have a say and be listened to, but you see that your feedback is acted upon and that you can be a part of making decisions that affect us all as tenants for the better.

Scan the QR code to see how you too can be part of change.



Involved with

Influencing repairs

The Resident Scrutiny Panel (RSP), who investigate different services to make recommendations for improvement, have completed their latest report.

They looked into the average amount of days it takes for a standard repair to be completed. Some of their recommendations included:

- **A maximum timescale to be set for a standard repair for works delivered in-house**
- **Promote that tenants inform Ongo of any changes to their health or disabilities**
- **Maintenance Policy to be shared at the tender/procurement stage with contractors**

Community Voice approved all the recommendations which will soon be implemented.

Stewart, RSP member, said: "This was my first full investigation as part of the group, and I loved it. Knowing that we as tenants have the ability to help improve an integral service area such as repairs is very reassuring."

Check out the full report here



You said, we listened

Thanks to your feedback, we have improved the wording of the specific options you are given when you call us.

The changes mean the information you receive is shorter and more precise, ensuring you can speak to an Advisor quicker and that your query is resolved sooner.



When you call us, you will now be asked to select one of the following options:

- 1 - The automated payment line to pay your rent
- 2 - A query regarding your rent account
- 3 - A repair for your home or Neighbourhood Services
- 4 - Anti-Social Behaviour, alteration requests and Tenancy Services
- 5 - Lettings, homeownership and leasehold enquiries
- 6 - Communities (such as employment and wellbeing support)
- 7 - All other enquiries

Ongo

Just under 9% of tenants engaging with us in 2021/22 were younger voices, an increase of 2.61% from the previous year.

(please note that around 10% of our tenants are aged 30 and under)



We want your feedback

You will be able to complete the annual Survey of Tenants and Residents (STAR) from October.

Your views are invaluable as it helps to shape and improve the services that you receive. Examples of what you want are:

- **To be listened to and kept informed**
- **The repairs and maintenance service to improve, including better communication and getting it right first time**
- **Us to be more visible and provide support**

Scan the QR code to see what we have done and planned based on your recent feedback.



Do you want to have more of a say on everything that affects you as a tenant? Scan the QR code to begin your journey.



A warm welcome

Four new Board members have been appointed, including two tenant representatives.

These are:

- **Kacper Merta (tenant)**
- **Hayley Phillips (tenant)**
- **Karen Locking**
- **Debbie Clegg**

All have been recruited to the Communities Board, with Kacper (26) also joining the main Group Common Board.

He said: "This is a perfect opportunity for me. I've always had an interest in housing, and I gained some important skills in my Business and Management undergraduate degree that I can bring into the role."

"The good thing is that I'm learning with every day and, although I haven't been involved on a Board before, having the experience of being a tenant is most important. I will help to make sure that every decision, investment and opportunity is for the benefit of all residents and the local community."

"I'm looking forward to being a part of overcoming challenges, finding solutions and making improvements."



Scan the QR code to find out more about our Boards and committees.



// It's an honour to be able to represent all tenants, and I'm passionate to have a lasting impact. //

A greener future with smart homes

Three pilot projects have begun which will help you live smarter, reduce wasted energy plus identify and solve issues quicker.



Switchee smart thermostats – planned to be fitted in 160 properties with air-source heat pumps. This project will help identify performance of the property, control the temperature of the home, monitor heating effectiveness and highlight any potential issues. A mobile app can be downloaded to control heating at the touch of a button.



Aico HomeLINK portable sensors – they are being installed in around 80 homes, specifically those with damp and mould issues. The sensors will mean corrective action can be taken quickly, future issues prevented and instant control and advice will be available through a mobile app.



Hostcomm visual assistance system – this trial began in August and has allowed you to show a repair or issue through live-video sharing. It allows for an instant visual inspection, guidance on how to resolve the issue and swifter resolution.

A couple of tenant focus groups took place in September to get your views. Anita attended a session and said: "I thoroughly enjoyed the opportunity to learn more, ask questions and influence the work in ensuring it is inclusive. There will be three more focus groups in 2023 so you can get involved too."



This project helps towards our aim of heating homes with clean energy and reaching net zero carbon emissions. Scan the QR code to learn more about each pilot.



Cooking up a

treat!

Warm and hearty shepherd's pie

Feeds
a family
of five for
under £5

What will I need?

- Mince meat
- Onion
- Carrots
- Peas
- Potatoes x2
- Margarine
- Gravy

Yummy! How can I make it?

1. Brown off the onions in a pan.
2. Add the mince into the pan and fry until brown.
3. Add the gravy, thinly sliced carrots and peas into the pan. Let it simmer for 15 – 20 minutes and then pour the mince into a baking tray.
4. Boil the potatoes and drain.
5. Add the margarine before mashing until smooth.
6. Spread the mash onto the mince.
7. Cook in the oven on 170°C heat for 10 minutes or until golden-brown (you can also add cheese to the top if you prefer).



One of our community hubs, The Arc, have a brand-new menu filled with affordable and tasty meals. **Scan the QR code to learn more.**



**Send us pics of your family
enjoying the meal.**



Learning life skills

The Endeavour project, which launched in 2021 to help more than 300 people into work, education or training, has completed a course focused on wellbeing and healthy cooking on a budget.

Across four sessions the group:

- Discovered how healthy eating can help your wellbeing
- Learnt how to shop and cook cheaply but healthily
- Achieved a Level 1 Food Safety qualification
- Cooked a nutritious meal of their choice

Doris Simpson was part of the activity and said:

“It was absolutely marvellous. We helped each other, learnt a lot and something like this is especially important in the current financial times.

“I’ve also been on trips to Waters’ Edge and Hall Farm through Ongo’s support to help with my stress and anxiety, and my son has got a placement at a local college thanks to their support. I can’t thank them enough.”

Emma Mcleary, Mental Health Specialist, added:

“We are really excited to do this course again soon, and we will be looking to involve our Ongo allotment so that we can focus on food sustainability and use produce grown there to cook with.”



The number of clients accessing training increased from 101 in 2020/21 to 239 in 2021/22.



Scan the QR code to learn more about our range of learning, wellbeing and employment projects.



A day in the life of... James

One of our Neighbourhood Services Operatives.

What does your role involve?

I help to maintain neighbourhoods and ensure that the community you live in is clean, tidy and safe. If you look out of your window and think ‘I love living here’, then that’s the main thing for me.

How closely do you work with other teams?

We as a team often liaise with North Lincolnshire Council, and others such as the **Tenant Inspectors**, **Environmental Champions** and **Tenancy Officers** are also a huge help. Everybody has a part to play in making neighbourhoods the best that they can be.

What is your favourite thing about the job?

Being outside and helping people. I used to work as a chef for 16 years where I eventually felt trapped, so it’s nice to now embrace the outdoors and work in different areas. The people I meet every day, and getting to know them, is something I really like too - it’s given me so much more self-confidence.

A motivational message?

I have dyslexia, got no qualifications from college and so couldn’t attend university, but I’ve not let that stop me from leading a good life and spreading my passion and kindness to others. If you give your all every single day, it’s amazing how far you can go.



In 2021/22, 73% of customers were satisfied with their neighbourhood as a place to live in compared to 87.3% in 2020/21.

Check out the next page on how we are working to improve that figure.



Our Environmental Champions help to ensure where they live is somewhere people are proud to call home. Find out more and sign up today:



In the community

An action day was held at Earls Walk (Scunthorpe) following a series of fly-tipping issues and dumped waste.

Our staff, Safer Neighbourhoods and the Police carried out improvement work and spoke to residents about their concerns. There have also been similar problems at other bin sites across the region, so we will carry out further action days in these areas.



Just as a reminder...

It says in tenancy agreements that you are responsible for your own rubbish and household waste, and any unwanted items are your responsibility to dispose of correctly. Local authorities collect and assist with bin collections and other items for disposal. When fly-tipping has occurred, we are responsible for our land and green spaces.

We will always work with and support individuals, but enforcement action will be taken against the perpetrators of fly-tipping and anti-social behaviour (ASB) in general. It's crucial that you report any such issues so that we can help to ensure your community remains safe, clean and tidy.

Did you know?

It costs over £100 for us to clear fly-tipping each time. This means we aren't able to invest as much in other communities and impacts the time and work in other areas.

You can now report ASB on your tenant portal, My Home, anytime and anywhere. Scan the QR codes to learn more.



In August, we were awarded a five-year injunction against a former tenant who was causing harassment and nuisance. This was also targeted towards some of our employees personally which is unacceptable, and so we had to act decisively to protect people and the wider community. The injunction prohibits the individual from making any contact with Ongo or any employees via any means.

Wordsearch



Mr and Mrs Ongo Bear loved the Carnival in August and want to learn about more free and cheaper ways to have fun! Can you help them find the different activities?

E	V	Z	L	B	N	F	E	E	N	K	W	Y	A	Z
S	C	V	A	O	F	F	P	P	A	R	K	S	D	U
T	D	L	I	Z	W	P	A	L	T	B	X	B	C	F
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NATURE WALKS

MUSEUMS

EXPLORE

EXERCISE

SIGHTSEE

PARKS

FREE SWIMS

LIBRARIES

VOLUNTEER

FREE APPS

ESTATE TIDYUP

PODCASTS

We want to hear what you think about this edition, and what you would like to see in the December issue.

Scan the QR code to give your feedback.



Saving you money

There are many easy ways in which you can reduce costs, check out just a few below:



Download an app such as **PetrolPrices** for the cheapest fuel where you live.



Find out what times supermarkets tend to do their **yellow-sticker discounts** (often around 6pm - 7pm).



Follow local pages such as **North Lincolnshire Libraries** online who regularly promote free events.



Check out social media channels and websites such as **Money Saving Expert**, **Cooking on a Bootstrap**, **Skint Dad** and others for budgeting inspiration.



Use sites such as **Vinted** and **Freecycle** plus **charity shops** where you'll often find quality items at low prices.



Look at the ingredients in a branded item compared to the same item in a supermarket's own range. You'll see that most are the same but that there's a sizeable price difference.



Consider **smart plugs** which allow you to control your electricity usage at the touch of a button anytime and anywhere.



Join apps such as **Too Good To Go** and **Olio** where many retailers offer food that would have gone to waste at heavily discounted prices.

If you would like Key News in another language, call 01724 279900.

Jeśli chcesz tę ulotkę w języku polskim, zadzwoń na 01724 279900

Jei norėtumėte šio lapelio, savo kalbą, susisiekite su mumis 01724 279900

Ja vēlaties šo instrukciju savā valodā, lūdzu, zvaniet mums uz 01724 279900

Se você gostaria deste folheto na sua língua, por favor ligue para 01724 279900

আপনি আপনার ভাষায় এই লিফলেট চান, অনুগ্রহ করে আমাদের সাথে 01724 279900 উপর কল

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