



Customer Engagement Handbook

Give your views

Shape services

Influence homes & communities

Make a difference





If you would like this leaflet in a different language, please call us on 01724 279900

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

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

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

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

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

如果您想本小册子在你的语言，请致电01724279900 (Chinese)

Customer Engagement
Ongo Homes Ltd
Ongo House
High Street
Scunthorpe
North Lincolnshire
DN15 6AT

Contact Customer Engagement by email:
customer.engagement@ongo.co.uk
or telephone **01724 279900**

Customer Engagement opportunities

Contents

Section 1

Introduction	1
Why get involved, what's in it for you?	1
Meet the Customer Engagement Team	2

Section 2

How can you become involved?	3
What you can become involved in	3
Community Voice	3
Tenant Shareholders	3
Residents Scrutiny Panel	3
Tenant Inspectors	4
Complaints Monitoring Panel	4
Equality Diversity & Inclusion Group	4
Property Services Panel	4
Publications Panel	5
Leaseholder Forum	5
Retirement Living Panel	5
Resident Building Safety Group	5
Focus / Consultation groups	5
Task & Finish Groups	5
Surveys	6
Social Media Communication	6
Training	6
Residents Associations & Community Groups	7

Section 3

Funding for Local Communities	8
Contact Details	9
#InvolvedWithOngo	10

Section 1 Introduction

Our vision is to
create & sustain
truly vibrant
communities

Hello

Thank you for taking the time to read this handbook. We hope this provides you with information that will encourage you to become involved in our customer engagement activities in the future.

We want to give all of our customers the chance to tell us what they think about the services they receive and to influence decisions that affect their homes and neighbourhoods. We will continue to develop our existing methods of engagement to make sure this continues to happen.

The Tenant Participation Advisory Service (TPAS) has recognised our commitment to engaging our customers by awarding our customer engagement service a national accreditation award. With your help, we want to continue to provide an excellent service to our customers and be recognised for our achievements.

If you are interested in any of the engagement opportunities available then you can complete the #InvolvedWithOngo postcard in just a few clicks using the My Home app, on our website or find it at the back of this handbook. You can also talk to us using our Live Chat feature on our website at [ongo.co.uk](https://www.ongo.co.uk)

You can also contact the Customer Engagement team direct by emailing customer.engagement@ongo.co.uk or call us on 01724 279900.

If you have any specific needs such as large print, Braille, translation, audio or if you require any other form of support then please let us know.

Your views and opinions are important to us and your involvement can make a real difference to our services and to your community.

Why get involved? What's in it for you?

Getting involved and participating is an important way for you to get your views heard and to influence decisions which affect your home and your local community.

Being involved brings lots of rewards:

- Recognition for your work from your own community and from Ongo
- The opportunity to learn new skills and increase knowledge, at a pace and level of your own choosing
- The chance to meet other volunteers who have similar interests and to make new friends

All customers should have an equal opportunity to become involved, regardless of their situation.

It's important to us that you're not out of pocket financially as a result of attending meetings or other activities (such as attending conferences or training events). Therefore, we cover expenses for travel and other reasonable costs to encourage you to get involved.

Meet the Customer Engagement Team

We know that it's important you are given the opportunity to do things you enjoy; being involved works best if you know your contribution has been recognised and has made a difference. We also recognise that sometimes there are things that might make it a little more difficult for you to take part, so we offer support to all our volunteers.

Members of the team will support individuals and help build confidence for those taking part in meetings to encourage them to participate and share their views.

Staff will help provide one to one training to enable new volunteers to learn and develop in whatever method of engagement they decide to be involved with. Examples of this include:

- The use of social media and different methods of communication
- Administrative support for producing paperwork for meetings
- Providing useful contacts for other external agencies that can help an individual or group
- Training and support opportunities from external companies to help develop skills
- Encourage attendance at conferences or seminars
- Help with transport or childcare costs to allow volunteers to attend meetings



Section 2

How can you become involved?

What you can become involved in:

Community Voice

Community Voice is the main Ongo recognised tenant body. This group works in partnership with Ongo to take decisions on operational customer facing issues, influencing improvements to homes, neighbourhoods and the quality of life for tenants, their households and the local communities.

Community Voice meetings usually take place on a monthly basis in a formal meeting setting (either a physical or video conferencing meeting). Any Ongo Homes tenant or leaseholder can become a member of the group.

Time Commitment - meetings are held for three hours each month.

Tenant Shareholders

If you become a member of Community Voice then you can apply to become a Tenant Shareholder. This is an important role as it allows you to attend and vote at Ongo Homes Annual General Meetings (AGMs) and General Meetings (GMs). This means you would be able to vote on major decisions, e.g. should Ongo Homes wish to merge with another landlord or take over another landlord.

Time Commitment - AGM meetings are held each year and other general meetings would be held on an ad hoc basis.

Residents Scrutiny Panel

The Scrutiny Panel consists of a group of residents who carry out detailed investigations into all aspects of Ongo Homes services (from a customer perspective). The panel work as auditors, selecting the service area they wish to investigate. They carry out desktop analysis of policies and procedures, customer satisfaction and financial information, plus they conduct interviews with Ongo staff and research what other housing providers are doing. They then make an overall assessment of the surveys, training etc, depending on the nature of the work involved for each investigation.

Time Commitment - meetings usually last for three hours and the frequency of meetings increases during an investigation. Additional time commitment will be required for carrying out research, interviewing, surveys, training etc. Depending on the nature of the work involved for each investigation.



Tenant Inspectors

Tenant Inspectors are volunteers who carry out reality checks on our services. Some of the inspections they can be involved in include:

- Acting as Mystery Shoppers
- Estate inspections
- Empty homes visits
- Green Space inspections
- Surveys

Being a Tenant Inspector means you have the opportunity to get involved in all aspects of the work or you may prefer to just be a Mystery Shopper. You can choose the way that suits you best.

Time Commitment – meetings take place every two months and normally last one and a half hours.

Complaints Monitoring Panel

The panel is made up of volunteers who focus on how Ongo Homes deals with complaints. The group works as a team to analyse how complaints have been processed and dealt with, checking for themes and trends in order to assess whether procedures have been followed or require changing.

Time Commitment – meetings take place for two/three hours every three months.

Equality Diversity & Inclusion Group

This is a partnership group of staff and volunteers who are responsible for making sure all Ongo staff and customers are treated fairly and appropriately, making sure that everyone has equal access to services and opportunities.

Time Commitment – meetings take place for two hours every three months.

Property Services Panel

Volunteers are involved to ensure that Ongo Homes' property services meet the needs of its customers. The panel invites tenants to the meetings to share their experience on work recently carried out to their home. Tenant panel members are also given the same opportunity. The panel members also influence the introduction of improvements to the repairs service and monitor the way they are delivered.

Time Commitment – meetings take place for two hours every three months.



Publications Panel

Ongo Homes provides information to customers through its tenants' newsletter, called Key News, and in a variety of other literature such as brochures and newsletters. This panel's purpose is to ensure articles are user and reader friendly, free from jargon, timely, suitable and appropriate.

Time Commitment – meeting frequency will vary depending on the timescales set out for each of the publications.

Leaseholder Forum

This is made up of a group of leaseholder representatives who come together to discuss common issues such as service charges and planned major works.

Time Commitment – meetings are held for two hours every three months.

Retirement Living Panel

This panel represents the views of tenants living in our retirement schemes. They agree on the consultation methods that best suit them and influence the decision making process to improve the standard and quality of services they receive.

Time Commitment – meetings are held for two hours every three months.

Resident Building Safety Group

The group are made up of representatives from different property types and help to influence & challenge building health and safety policies and practices to ensure Ongo meet the legal compliance in residents' safety. They act as resident health & safety champions that can help to spread the word to residents at large on how to stay safe and take part in the consultation process for building safety. Being involved with this group allows members to raise any concerns and questions at meetings on behalf of residents at large and their communities.

Time Commitment – meetings are held on a quarterly basis and last for up to 2 hours. Additional meetings may sometimes be arranged as and when required.

Focus/Consultation Groups

We regularly use focus groups to gather views and opinions on a specific area of Ongo Homes services.

The group can be a one off meeting to discuss a specific topic. This would normally include a small group of customers and one or two Ongo Homes staff. Customers are encouraged to put forward their own personal views on the topic in question. For example, people who have recently been allocated an Ongo Homes property are able to influence the standard and condition of future homes that are made available to let.

Time Commitment – these meetings are usually held as and when required and would last for a period of two hours.



Task and Finish Groups

These groups hold meetings to discuss a specific topic with the aim of providing solutions to help improve a particular service. The group would require short term involvement over a few weeks or months from customers who are willing to share their opinions.

Time Commitment – these meetings are usually held as and when required and would last for a period of two hours.

Surveys

We use a variety of written, telephone and electronic surveys to obtain views about a range of issues that affect customers' homes and communities. We use comments received to improve and develop services and to plan the best use of our resources. Surveys are a cost effective and convenient method for you to give your views from the comfort of your own home at a time of your choosing.

Social Media Communication

The information in this booklet shows how we provide a variety of opportunities to consult with customers but we also recognise that attending meetings may not be the right choice for everyone. Therefore many other communication and engagement methods are available for you to make your views known to us. Examples include Twitter, Facebook and our My Home app etc.

We have a digital group of customers called Tenant Testers. This panel is a group of tenants who we can call on when we have something that we need to run past our customers. They

are prepared to challenge the way we do things, to recommend improvements, and offer vital insights and input when recommending service improvements.

Time Commitment – you will receive invitations to give your opinion as and when they arise. On most occasions, we will offer you a shopping voucher depending on the time and commitment you are able to give. You can unsubscribe from this panel any time you want. If you are interested in taking part, please get in touch.

Training

We can provide training to help you to learn basic computer skills or about using social media such as Twitter and Facebook. For more information, you can use our online contact form and a member of the Customer Engagement team will get in touch.



Residents Associations & Community Groups

A residents association is a group of people living in a neighbourhood who work to promote the interests of all residents and bring local communities together. This is a great way to meet your neighbours, share your concerns and common interests, and create community spirit.

There are many reasons why people may wish to get together to form a group:

- To campaign for something – e.g. better grass cutting service, activities for youngsters, better parking facilities
- To campaign against something – e.g. new housing policies, closure of community facilities
- To increase community spirit by holding social events and meeting people - e.g. coach trips, coffee mornings, fun days etc.
- To make sure the community is informed of issues that may affect them

Ongo Homes has a responsibility to ensure that groups are being truly representative of the community they live in and wish to represent. We need to ensure the right level of resources and support are available to residents associations and community groups so they can operate effectively. Our recognition criteria provides guidance on how residents associations and community groups should operate. Copies of the criteria can be found on our website ongoco.uk or upon request.



Section 3

Funding for Local Communities

Ongo Homes helps support community groups to apply for funding. We can help you to prepare information and submit funding applications or we can signpost you to organisations who can do that for you.

Grants that Ongo Homes directly provide to help run a local group include:

Start-Up Grants for Residents Associations & Community Groups

A Start-Up Grant is given as a one off payment to all new residents associations and community groups to help with the cost of getting the group up and running. The grant is to pay towards items such as advertising leaflets and venue hire.

To qualify for this grant the following criteria needs to be met:

- The group must be willing to represent views of all tenants and residents living within an agreed boundary area. The area they represent will be detailed in a constitution developed in partnership between the group and the Customer Engagement team
- Support is provided from Customer Engagement for a period of 6 months to help a group to become established and the committee members develop in their roles
- The group must adopt a formal constitution that is recognised by Ongo and members must sign up and abide by our Volunteers Code of Conduct
- A bank account for the group must be opened containing 3 different signatures on the account (which must be from different households)

Annual Grants for Residents Associations & Community Groups

The annual grant is for established residents associations and community groups to help with their running costs for venue hire, stationery, leaflets and advertising.

The amount of grant available depends on the number of Ongo Homes properties covered by the group.

This grant is in addition to individual groups raising their own funds.

To qualify for this grant, the following criteria needs to be met:

- The association or group must hold an Annual General Meeting (AGM) and their accounts have to be checked prior to this meeting taking place
- The election of the officers and committee must take place as stated in their constitution



If you want more information, then please:



Try our online Live Chat feature to speak to an advisor, or complete our online customer contact form.
ongo.co.uk



Email us at
customer.engagement@ongo.co.uk

You can talk to us on our social media channels too



Facebook.com/OngoHomes

“Get involved, make a difference”



@ongouk



You can also phone us on 01724 279900, or write to us at Customer Engagement, Ongo Homes Ltd, Ongo House, High Street, Scunthorpe, North Lincolnshire, DN15 6AT

#InvolvedWithOngo

We want all our customers to have the opportunity to be involved and shape the services we offer. This could be anything from having your say on policy changes, helping to improve our services or your local neighbourhood.

Now tell us how you'd like to be involved (tick any that you're interested in)

- Joining a group, e.g. Community Voice, Tenant Inspectors, Resident Scrutiny Panel
- Digital surveys, consultation (as and when required)
- Focus/consultation groups (meetings on a specific subject)
- Formal meetings (pre-planned, monthly/quarterly, face-to-face)

Please provide your details and return to us, an officer from Customer Engagement will be in touch.

Name

Address

Postcode

Telephone

Email

If you'd like to contact a member of the team, email customer.engagement@ongo.co.uk or call **01724 279900**

DATA PROTECTION: For full details of how we will use your personal information and comply with current UK data protection law please see our privacy notice on www.ongo.co.uk.