



Ongo

Recruitment Pack

**Various Positions: Group Board Members,
Committee Members and Board Trainees**

May 2024



Welcome from our Chief Executive – Steve Hepworth

Thanks for expressing an interest in the Board positions available at Ongo. We're seeking four skilled and enthusiastic individuals for roles within our governance structure. We're also looking to recruit two Board Trainees. More information about our structure and the roles available are in this pack.



This is an exciting time to join Ongo. We have a G1 / V1 judgement from the Regulator of Social Housing, and this is a very solid foundation for the organisation. We've just launched a new Corporate Plan with three clear objectives for the next five years. Here at Ongo, working in partnership with our tenants is a key part of everything we do – and one of our core values as we work towards being a great landlord, being customer focused and growing a sustainable organisation.

With new changes to consumer regulation by our regulator, the Regulator of Social Housing, increased scrutiny and focus on the sector and an increase in Housing Ombudsman cases a high performing Board is essential.

Our Board has an important role in setting the right culture and framework for success at Ongo. We are an ambitious organisation and need members who can drive our aspiration to be a great landlord and being customer focussed.

As part of our non-executive team you'll need to work in partnership with our Executives, providing the right balance of challenge and support with strong governance at the heart of what we do.

You'll need to be able to balance the need for strategic thinking alongside the ability to scrutinise performance and make sure we are putting the needs and aspirations of our tenants at the heart of everything we do and work collaboratively with other Board Members, Officers and our stakeholders. These roles each have a different focus and there is more information in this pack on our specific needs. In brief, we are looking for:

- One Group Board member role with the skills to oversee our work on housing development and construction, for social and affordable rental and across a range of low cost and outright sale options. Ideally, with knowledge and experience of housing development work as well as Homes England funding arrangements although we will also consider outstanding applicants who have relevant skills and knowledge that can be applied to this role.
- One Group Board member role **and** one independent committee member role with commercial experience to support, develop and oversee our commercial activity in



relation to roofing and heating services. Strong business acumen, a focus on customer service and business development would be useful.

- One Group Board member role with skills and experience relating to governance in a regulated sector and a strong focus on good governance processes and practice.

All candidates for the Group Board and Committee member posts will set strategic direction and objectives, understand the legal, charitable and regulatory duties of a Non-Executive Director, undertake effective performance management and have robust financial oversight.

We are also looking to recruit two Board Trainees to join us. The Board Trainee role is a two year programme, running in conjunction with HDN. For these roles, we're not looking for a Board ready individual, but somebody with the enthusiasm and willingness to learn about becoming a Board Member. We want to attract candidates from a diverse range of talent. Working with HDN, you'll receive training and support to get you board ready. It's a development scheme to create a pipeline of talent for diversity on boards. To express an interest in the Board Trainee scheme, please visit www.ongo.co.uk/boardtrainee

The pack gives an overview of some of our key work and our Corporate Plan goes into greater detail about this. We think now is a really exciting time to join us and to oversee the delivery of our three core objectives – to be a great landlord, ensure our tenants and customers remain our focus across everything we do and to grow and be a sustainable organisation. You can view the plan here: <https://www.ongo.co.uk/about-ongo/corporate-documents/our-five-year-plan/>

This is a rewarding role, one where you can use your skills to support the delivery of our broad corporate mission and the delivery of quality homes. I would like to wish you every success in your application.

Good luck!

Steve Hepworth, Chief Executive



Introduction to the Group Board and Committee Member Positions

Thanks for your interest in the available positions. We are seeking to recruit four new members within the Group governance structure. This recruitment pack provides more detailed information, but as a summary, the four posts are as follows:

- An Ongo Homes Group Board member who will also be a member of the Ongo Developments Board
- An Ongo Homes Group Board member who will also be a member of the Governance and Remuneration Committee
- An Ongo Homes Group Board member who will also be a member of the Ongo Commercial Board
- An independent member of the Ongo Commercial Board

On the following pages, you'll find details of the roles available and the selection process to assist you in completing and tailoring your application. We have a general requirement for our Board and Committee Members to demonstrate a number of competencies (detailed at the end of this pack). Please also read through our role profiles for this position which we have provided separately. We encourage applications from a diverse range of people helping us to be representative of the communities we serve. Our Board is currently underrepresented of our community base in relation to ethnicity those who consider themselves to have a disability.

How to apply for the Group Board and Committee Member Positions

To apply you should submit

- An **up to date CV**
- Provide a **statement** that explains why you are interested in the role, details how you are a good candidate and how you fulfil the skills requirement. We recommend your statement is no longer than three pages. Please indicate on your supporting statement if you cannot attend the interview date.
- A fully completed **declarations & fit and proper person's** form – please ensure that you complete every page

We are open to receiving applications for more than one position but please indicate on your statement which role(s) you are interest in.

It would help us if you would also complete an **equalities monitoring** form. This is not mandatory but will help us monitor our commitment to equality and diversity.

Application documents should be emailed to a.lomax@ntp.uk.com **by no later than 5pm on 7 June 2024**. Late applications will not be accepted. Your application will be acknowledged within 48 hours of receipt. Please contact Angela Lomax at NTP if you have not heard from us within that time.



Appointment of Group Board and Committee Member Positions

All appointments will have terms of office in line with the National Housing Federation Code of Governance, 2020.

Informal Discussion About Group Board and Committee Member Positions

If you'd like to know a bit more and would like an informal chat about these roles, please contact:

Ian Robertson at ema on Tel: 07947 126329 email: ian.robertson@emaconsultancy.org.uk
or

Angela Lomax at DTP on Tel: 07702213809 email: a.lomax@dtp.uk.com or

Steve Hepworth, Chief Executive on Tel: 07717 587665 email steve.hepworth@ongo.co.uk

Board Trainees

For our Board Trainees, we have different expectations as we'll support you through a training programme to build your skills and competencies. We are specifically seeking applications from diverse candidates for this programme. This is a two year programme we deliver alongside Housing Diversity Network (HDN). You'll attend every Ongo Homes Board meeting and Board Wide Strategy Events plus meetings of other Boards/Committees within our governance structure. You'll also receive from HDN a programme of events/training/conferences to attend with them. They'll allocate you a mentor to help you get the best out of the programme. At the end of the two years, the aim is you've developed your skills and confidence and are ready to apply for Board positions. To express an interest in becoming a trainee visit <https://www.ongo.co.uk/about-ongo/our-group/about-our-boards/boardtrainees/>



About Ongo

We were set up in 2007 as North Lincolnshire Homes when we took over the housing stock from North Lincolnshire Council. We've come a long way since then, including a re-brand to become Ongo. We set Ongo up as a group of companies so that we can do more for our communities. Our commercial businesses generate income to invest back into our homes and communities. Our charity, Ongo Communities creates opportunities for tenants and residents with our employment support services and recruitment agency.



With around 11,000 homes to rent and a workforce of nearly 500, we are the largest landlord in North Lincolnshire, providing homes to over 25,000 people. While most of our homes are in North Lincolnshire we also have homes in surrounding areas of Lincolnshire, South Yorkshire and Nottinghamshire.

Being a landlord providing quality homes for people is our core organisational purpose. It's the reason we all come to work each day; to provide a good quality service for our tenants and customers, to make sure their homes and communities are places to be proud of, and that we make sure there are opportunities that enable and support our tenants and customers to thrive.

Any profit we make as a business is reinvested straight back into local communities. When you work with, or partner with us, you're helping local people and communities to thrive. Being Ongo is believing we can make a difference, and by working with us – you will also be positively impacting the local area.



As a group of companies we have one aim - that everything we do supports and enhances local people and the communities they live in.



Our Corporate Plan will give us a foundation for what we aspire to achieve over the next five years. Our objectives are:

Be a great landlord

- All our homes will be in good repair, safe and secure in clean, well-maintained neighbourhoods that are thriving with community spirit.
- Communication with our tenants and customers will be clear, and we will listen and act on what they tell us.



- We will keep our tenants and customers informed and they will know what they can expect from us.
- Repairs to our homes will be completed in a timely manner and tenants and customers will be able to track the progress of their repair and know what will happen next.

Customer focus

- Our workforce will be professional, competent and suitably qualified with access to the appropriate systems to deliver excellent services.
- Everyone who works for Ongo will be customer focused and totally committed to our values and the work we do.
- Through investment in local communities, employment support and training, our tenants and customers will be supported and empowered to thrive in their homes and communities.

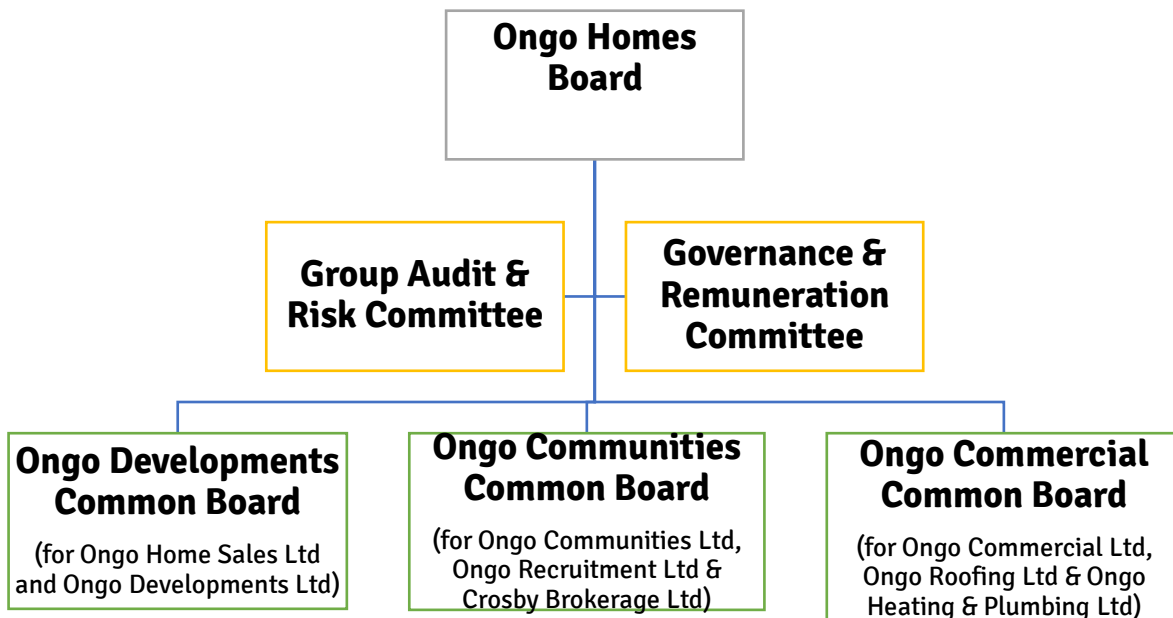
Growth and sustainability

- In order to meet the need for more affordable homes, we will invest in our existing homes and build and acquire homes, ensuring they are fit for purpose and cost effective.
- We will improve our local environments and reduce our carbon footprint.
- We will continuously improve the financial stability and governance of the organisation.



Our governance arrangements

Our governance structure is designed to simplify arrangements and provide greater focus and oversight on the range of activity within the group whilst ensuring our social housing is safeguarded.



Key Dates

The closing date for applications is **5pm on 7 June 2024**. All applications will be considered and assessed against the requirements of the Role Profile to create a shortlist of candidates to interview. If you are successful at this stage, we will contact you.

The interview process or Group Board and Committee members

Interviews for shortlisted candidates will take place on **15 and 16 July 2024** and will be held at Ongo House, High Street, Scunthorpe, DN15 6AT. The panel for the interviews will be:

- Bob Walder – Group Chair
- Rachel Cook – Senior Independent Director of the Board
- Steve Hepworth – Group Chief Executive
- Angela Lomax – advisor, DTP

Remuneration

The roles are remunerated at:

- Ongo Homes Board Members – £6,500 per year
- Ongo Commercial Board Member - £3,750 per year

All successful candidates will be asked to sign an Agreement for Services.



Induction and Events

All successful candidates will be supported through our induction process which takes place during the first six months of appointment.

Time Commitment and Meeting Schedule

Meetings are generally held in Scunthorpe and you will be expected to attend all meetings in person. Ongo Homes Board meets around six times a year. Ongo Commercial Board meets four times a year plus additional quick catch up meetings every other month by MS Teams. Ongo Developments Board meets around four times per year. Each meeting will require up to a day of work, considering reading and preparation and around 2-3 hours for the meeting. We also expect you to spend time keeping up to date with issues in the wider group and provide you access to information to help you do this. You will be expected to attend Away Days, training and other events throughout the year. In total the time commitment is therefore likely to be around 10 days per year but this can vary.

We expect our Members will make every effort to attend meetings in person, although we do have the facility to offer a blended approach (to join by MS Teams) by exception on those occasions when attending in person is not possible. Where you are unable to attend, you are expected to send apologies in advance and explain this at your earliest opportunity.

During the first six months there will be an additional time commitment as you work through our induction processes.

Applicant Criteria

We are unable to accept applications from candidates who are ineligible to serve as a Board Member. This is detailed on the form we have sent to you and includes individuals who:

- are bankrupt or subject to any agreement with creditors
- are disqualified for any reason from acting as a Company Director or Charity Trustee
- would not be considered a Fit & Proper Person by HMRC
- are unable to comply with our Code of Conduct and/or have made a declaration of any actual or potential conflict of interest affecting them, members of their family and businesses or other companies which they are associated or closely connected. This includes any matters that could be perceived as a conflict of interest.



Board Skills, Competency and Behaviours

Below are the competencies we expect our Board Members to demonstrate.

Competency		Definition	Behaviour descriptors
1	Willingness and ability to govern within the Ongo Group culture and operating environment	A member who understands the culture and operating environment of Ongo Group and demonstrates a fit with the ethos of the organisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understands and proactively engages in the board's responsibility to shape the culture of the organisation • Is able to balance effective risk management with a desire to be innovative and to develop best practice • Demonstrates a commitment to enabling others to develop and thrive • Is able to horizon scan and apply future thinking to Ongo Group strategy and delivery plans
2	Effective communication and engagement with colleagues	Ability to communicate effectively and respectfully with Executive and Non-Executive colleagues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication is concise - sticks to the point and does not waste discussion time • Contributes at an appropriate time • Allows other to contribute – does not dominate the discussion • Demonstrates the ability to actively listen • Respects the roles and views of others – inside and outside of the Board and Committees • Is aware of the effect of own behaviour, feelings and actions on others and manages this sensitively to get the best from interactions with others • Reaches a conclusion based on a rational interpretation of the available information • Compromises where appropriate – is able to display collective responsibility for decision making • Responds to situations in a clear open and professional manner • Builds, fosters and sustains effective working relationships • Recognises the strengths and contributions of other team members



Competency		Definition	Behaviour descriptors
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actively contributes to the effectiveness of the Board and Committees • Able to solve problems, identify and navigate through potential conflicts to build effective relationships with colleagues • Acts as a critical friend to Ongo Group
3	Working as part of an effective team	Board and committee decision making is usually done by consensus and influencing skills play an important part. The ability to challenge constructively is key to maintaining good working relationships while fulfilling the role.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can confront and challenge with independent thinking without appearing aggressive • Challenges established thinking to ensure long term value and sustainability • Works collaboratively to secure consensus decisions • Influences others through persuasive, thoughtful contributions • Able to identify strengths and weaknesses in their own and others points of view • Raises issues in a way that is not personal and does not seek to attribute blame • Accepts and supports collective decisions
4	Leadership	The extent to which a Board or Committee leads and motivates an organisation influences its success and is a key indicator from a regulatory perspective of effective governance. Within a Board and Committee, effective leadership from the Chair is equally important.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Takes personal responsibility and encourages others to do the same • Actively promotes the interests of Ongo Group outside the organisation • Demonstrates high standards of honesty, ethics, integrity and probity, including understanding the impact on others • Is consistently fair and equitable in the treatment of colleagues, staff and stakeholders • Applies the principles and understanding of equal opportunities, diversity and Ongo Group values at all times • Able to make independent and critical judgements, providing challenge to executive • Keeps the Board and Committees focussed on reaching decisions



Competency		Definition	Behaviour descriptors
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is willing to make difficult decisions • Seeks to develop others and offers constructive support • Demonstrates personal resilience and the ability to help others through challenges and set backs • Understands, is committed to and is able to articulate the short, medium and long term strategic objectives of Ongo Group
5	Analysing and scrutinising	A key role of the Board and Committees is to monitor performance, requiring effective analysis of information in various formats. Board and Committee members also need to seek out information, giving them the context within which to knowledgably and confidently assess performance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assimilates information effectively • Identifies any major gaps in information • Self-confident enough to not be right and certain all the time but have a willingness to bring questions to explore • Able to read between the lines and weighs up the pros and cons • Adapts own behaviour appropriately to support and facilitate change • Explores the implications of a proposal or action • Able to analyse and interpret sometimes conflicting information to reach conclusions and choose an appropriate course of action • Offers appropriate and relevant comparisons • Keeps to the appropriate level of detail • Actively seeks facts, data and information necessary to ensure focus on management of risk and delivery of business performance is in line with regulatory, legal and other key factors • Able to draw correct conclusions from complex information • Pays attention to detail without losing sight of wider strategic goals
6	Directing strategy	Effective performance in this area means that a Board and Committee member adds value to	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Able to take an overview, considering all factors • Offers creative ideas or perspectives - believes in change and scans the environment to see the bigger picture and the longer term future • Applies specialist knowledge appropriately



Competency	Definition	Behaviour descriptors
	Ongo Group framework for setting future plans and action.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluates risks and likely outcomes when reaching decisions • Keeps up to date with internal and external operating environment • Recognises major/potential influences on the organisation’s future and its strategic plans • Balances commercial and social principles • Focused on results and outcomes for customers and the organisation • Contributes to setting, prioritising and monitoring delivery strategic objectives • Flexible mind set, willing to adapt to plans in response to changes affecting the business
7	Customer focused	<p>The Board and Committees need to align their approach with the requirements and priorities of customers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shows constant awareness of the various customers of the Ongo Group as the primary business driver • Listens to, understands and responds to the needs, views and aspirations of Ongo Group customers • Uses qualitative and quantitative lines of assurance to inform board decision making in an open and transparent way • Understands the impact of the digital agenda in relation to customer services • Demonstrates a clear tenant perspective and an ability to understand and articulate tenants’ needs • Demonstrates understanding of the communities in which Ongo works
8	Self-management and development	<p>It is imperative that a Board and Committee member takes ownership of their own personal development and commits fully to the role they have been given.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepares in advance, regularly attends and participates fully in Board and Committee meetings • Uses delegated powers appropriately • Demonstrates enthusiasm, energy and commitment to the work of the Board and Committee • Respects confidences



Competency		Definition	Behaviour descriptors
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participates fully in appraisals and Board and Committee effectiveness reviews • Actively seeks feedback • Passionate about continuous learning to develop effectiveness and demonstrates this learning • Seeks opportunities to be exposed to new thinking, experiences and insights • Is up to date and in touch with relevant issues
9	Partnerships and relationships	Committed to partnerships and relationships which support the delivery of Ongo Group strategy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acts responsibly and appropriately • Demonstrates loyalty to Ongo Group • Able to bring value to the Board or Committee as a result of involvement in other partnerships, networks and activity • Demonstrates an awareness of stakeholder and partner roles and their value to Ongo Group • Established a rapport and commands the respect of other board and committee members • Effective ambassador and advocate, enhancing Ongo Group reputation and profile

