



# **Ongo Homes Scrutiny Subgroup**

## **Investigation into**

### **Aids & Adaptations**

**(February 2026)**

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## 1.0. Introduction

This report is a result of an investigation into the Aids and Adaptations process for Ongo Homes, and how requests from customers are dealt with.

The Scrutiny subgroup started their investigation in October 2025.

Throughout the duration of the investigation, the group endeavoured to uphold the key principles relating to its scrutiny work, namely that the group would:

- a. Work on behalf of Ongo and its tenants to ensure that Ongo provides services to the highest standard.
- b. Provide an independent check and offer critical challenges to drive and influence improvements to standards, processes, performance, and time management.
- c. Ensure that Ongo complies with the RSH Transparency, Influence and Accountability standard when delivering services to tenants.
- e. Provide an effective but independent part of the Governance structure within Ongo, together with Community Voice (CV), to provide the fourth line of assurance to the Executive Leadership Team and the Ongo Homes Board.
- f. Ensure Ongo is a well-managed, viable organisation which places tenants at the heart of its business, delivered through tenant led scrutiny and other forms of involvement.

Community Voice members made the decision for the subgroup to investigate Aids and Adaptations, and it was agreed from a number of topics discussed at a Community Voice meeting. These were provided for consideration by Erica Sanderson (Business Assurance and Risk Manager). Members at the meeting were provided with some background for the review, explaining what assurance means and how assurance is provided to Ongo Homes Board. An assurance map was developed to understand what assurance Ongo has relating to the following:

- Business operations
- Oversight functions
- Independent review
- Customer review

It was identified as part of this process there were gaps in assurance for various risk areas. Some of the assurance gaps would be picked up as part of Internal Audit reviews or internal compliance reviews but Adaptations were identified as an area of risk not covered and has specific gaps around customer assurance.

Community Voice made their decision independently of any outside influence.

Scrutiny report (Aids & Adaptations Investigation (v2. Final March 26)

The following people engaged in conducting this investigation:

Scrutiny Subgroup members

Tracey Bain  
Tami Reeve  
Charamine Mande  
Rhiannon Jeans

Supported By

Wendy Wolfe  
Erica Sanderson

(there had originally been three other members involved, however due to personal issues they couldn't continue with this review)

## 2. Scope of the investigation

The following aspects were considered as part of the investigation:

- Do Ongo Homes clearly communicate to tenants how they will assist tenants seeking housing adaptations services?
- Is there a clear policy and consistent process for adaptations in place that explains:
  - How requests for adaptations should be made?
  - How requests for adaptations are dealt with?
  - Who is responsible for making decisions in relation to adaptations?
  - Where Ongo Homes refuses requests for adaptations, is the process for this followed?
  - Where refusals are given, do Ongo Homes support tenants where appropriate for alternatives to adaptations?
- Are tenants aware of how to raise requests for adaptations?
- Are tenants satisfied with the service and the work carried out?
- Is communication with tenants effective? (including looking at how the service is promoted)
- How long do adaptations take from request to completion?
- Is the partnership with relevant Local Authorities (i.e. North Lincolnshire Council, Doncaster MBC, Lincolnshire County Council, Northeast Lincolnshire Council) effective? (including looking at the role of Occupational Therapists and how the service is funded)
- Does the service comply with regulatory and legislative requirements (e.g. RSH Safety & Quality Standard)?
- Data to include information for the period (24/25 to 25/26 - to date)
- VFM – costs to be considered

The services and departments involved in the investigation were:

Assets and Sustainability, Property Services, Neighbourhoods and Customer Experience (customer services/customer contact centre).

The following themes were not included in the scope for investigation:

Scrutiny report (Aids & Adaptations Investigation (v2. Final March 26)

- Property Alterations
- Repairs not relevant to aids and adaptations
- Personal & historical issues relating to aids and adaptations (the focus is on wider tenants)

The Scrutiny subgroup would like to thank and acknowledge the help and support from the members of staff involved during this investigation.

### **3. Background**

The Scrutiny subgroup decided to investigate this area to gain more understanding of the full process involved and responsibility in terms of tenants making requests for aids and adaptations, to see if any improvements could be made from a tenant's perspective.

### **4. Methodology**

The Scrutiny Subgroup used the following fact-finding methods in order to gain more understanding to help with the review:

- 4.1.1 The requirements of the RSH Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard were discussed, with considerations being identified for this particular review.
- 4.1.2 Desktop consideration of the current procedures, policy documents etc.
- 4.1.3 Background presentation provided by Ongo staff (Head of Assets & Sustainability) that included an understanding of their role in terms of the topic being reviewed.
- 4.1.4 Operational staff providing responses from a set of questions the subgroup produced.
- 4.1.5 Research into peer organisations to see how they operate.
- 4.1.5 Minutes taken and distributed. Information and documents shared by email.
- 4.1.6 A final meeting was held to identify, discuss and agree good practice and to formulate recommendations.

### **5. Findings**

Meetings and information provided by staff helped the subgroup to identify gaps missing in the process for Aids and Adaptations, e.g., recording details on the internal systems, conducting inspections following completion of work, more awareness for tenants on how to raise requests and the process, updating the policy.

Research conducted by the Subgroup showed that information available from other housing providers varied in terms of publishing a policy and type of information available to customers on the process etc.

Research was carried out from 11 housing providers – Platform Housing Group, Connect Housing, Barnsley, West Kent, Nottingham Council HA, South Yorkshire Housing, Aspire Housing, In Communities, Coru Group, Longhurst & Havelock Housing, Regender Group.

The group found that from all the providers researched the aids and adaptations policies were very similar. The ones that stood out more were Platform Housing who had a user-friendly step-by-step guide to the process and the format was simple to follow. The policy provided by Longhurst & Havelock Homes was clear in terms of what constitutes major and minor adaptations, who is responsible and any costs which may be involved. Also informing tenants of timelines, including monthly reviews of adaptations completed by both them and the local authorities. They use an Occupational Therapist within the council and employ an independent living or service manager for minor adaptations, where possible. Despite the policy being several pages long it did provide information that would be beneficial to customers.

The group agreed that these two organisations should be used as best practice when reviewing the policy and consider producing a step-by-step guide.

## 6. Conclusions

The Scrutiny subgroup are confident that the brief/scope for this investigation has been met. Relevant documentation, including minutes of meetings and research findings, can be made available upon request.

Community Voice are asked for comments on the recommendations before the final report is submitted to the Customer Focus Committee for approval.

## 7. Recommendations

Number	Recommendation	Anticipated Outcome / Comments	Priority
1.	All works carried out to be inspected on completion. Review staffing resources for this.	Monitor works have been completed satisfactory to ensure they meet any legal requirements etc.	High
2.	Information to be provided on work completed for major and minor adaptations in terms of new installations where a new component has been fitted, to enable this to be logged onto the Asset management register / system.	More accurate records and details against properties by keeping information up to date.	High

3.	More information to be available on adaptations for tenants on the website and Myhome, etc. and easier to access.	Clearer understanding of the process by raising awareness to customers.	<b>Med / High</b>
4.	Consider looking at proactive adaptations to future proof properties.	Being more proactive. Reducing disruption for customers.	<b>Low</b>
5.	Update the policy to provide clarity on the difference between both major and minor adaptations.  Consider changing the name of the policy.  (see Longhurst & Havelock policy as good practice).	Increase awareness of customers.  Enhanced Customer satisfaction with process  Demonstrate Ongo's commitment to addressing requests for Aids & Adaptations.	<b>High</b>
6.	A step-by-step guide to be produced (see Platform Homes for good practice).	Clearer understanding of the process by raising awareness to customers.	<b>Med</b>

	High
	Medium
	Low