



ONGO CUSTOMER FOCUS COMMITTEE

Held at 1.30pm on Tuesday 11 November 2025
The Enterprise Suite, The Arc, 2 Lichfield Avenue, Scunthorpe, DN17 1QX

MINUTES

Present:

Committee: Judith Tomlinson (Chair), Rhiannon Jeans (Teams), Marianne Sonksen, Keeley McCahey (Teams), Sarah Roxby (Teams), Matt Sugden

Officers: Steve Ellard, Kevin Hornsby, Louise Usher, Bev Lewis (Minutes), Jo Sugden

Apologies: Steve Hepworth, Gemma Willey, Mike Finister-Smith

Absence: None

Also Present: Mo Mathieson, Becky Johns, Wendy Wolfe, John Hughes, Helen Heseltine, Dawn Hill,

Observers: Lisa Smith, Anita Cleugh, Sarah Wilson

Time meeting opened: 1.27pm

Quorum: It was reported that proper notice of the Meeting had been given in accordance with the Terms of Reference (quorum is 3 with one of these being a Board member and two being Independent tenant committee members), the Chair declared the meeting open.

1. **Welcome, introduction and apologies.**

The Chair opened the meeting, and apologies were noted as received in advance for Steve Hepworth, Gemma Willey and Mike Finister Smith

2. **Declarations of Interest**

Declarations were made by Judith Tomlinson and Matt Sugden who are Members of Ongo Homes Board.

3. **Agenda Item 3 – Action List**

The action list was noted.

4. **Agenda Item 4 - Update from Community Voice Chair**

Summary: The report is intended to provide the Customer Focus Committee with details of tenant feedback from the Community Voice group along with how this will help to influence improvements to service delivery. Update from Community Voice and from the meeting held 15 October 2025.

Discussion points/questions:

- The launch of the new Neighbourhood Model was one of the topics discussed. It has been very well received with acknowledgements around 1500 tenants had been approached for their input during the implementation of this new initiative.
- Every home received a hard copy of the Key News and future editions will be digital and regional in line with the new model. It was noted that this issue was not as regional as future editions will be as it is still new. This edition was to introduce their neighbourhood officer with lots of QR codes to learn more. It was felt that Ongo staff will also benefit greatly from the new scheme and give them a lot more understanding of their tenants and their needs with improved communication.
- An article in the Key news was picked up by housing digital and promoted across the housing sector which resulted in Inside Housing contacting Ongo to publish an article on best practice on how using tenant feedback can make a difference.

Agreed: Committee

- confirmed this report provided relevant information in relation to providing regular updates from the Community Voice group and other tenant groups.

4. Agenda item 5 – External Impacts Update

Summary: Presentation of slides by Jo Sugden detailing some external factors that may be helpful to Members.

Question points/comments:

- Committee welcomed this new agenda item and found it useful, and going forward they asked for the presentation to give brief information about what these impacts mean for Ongo. The factors discussed were:
- Our arrears situation and plans/processes are historically strong. We remain ahead of the sector thanks to early intervention and the support offered to tenants who may be experiencing difficulties. The 1.5% in arrears at the end of September 2025 were true arrears not including UC arrears. There is a risk in place around this, but it has never been a concern which is not the case across the sector.
- Preparation for the Decent Homes Consultation involves identifying the most suitable forum to present these matters, acknowledging potential financial implications and recommending a proportionate approach to assess impacts. Floor coverings represent a large portion of costs, with average expenses from other providers varying significantly, which makes accurate predictions difficult. The Minimum Energy Efficiency Standard Consultation currently has four options under review. Regarding assurance, the necessary work will be completed, although timing and scope are still being considered at this stage and will be ongoing.

Agreed: Committee

- Noted the slides and narrative given and discussed and debated any issues

6. Agenda Item 6 – Customer Engagement Report (Quarterly)



Summary: Customer Engagement has been a core component of Ongo Homes' approach to enhancing tenant involvement and service responsiveness. Over recent years, there has been a strategic shift towards increasing digital engagement alongside traditional face-to-face methods, enabling broader and more flexible tenant participation. Prior quarterly reports have highlighted progress in developing blended meeting formats, expanding volunteer training, and improving communication channels such as social media and MyHome digital platforms. This report continues that trajectory by demonstrating ongoing efforts to capture tenant feedback, influence service improvements, and nurture stronger community partnerships.

Discussion points/questions:

- The report covers various groups and activities within the organisation. One of the highlights being focus on targets for engaging younger customers exist; after advertising and promotion, the digital tenants group gained 10 new members under age 40.
- Digital engagement has increased greatly in addition to face-to-face methods. In response to a member's request for evidence, the Digital Tenants Group monitors Myhome and our social media platforms, and their feedback details are included in the appendix.
- This report includes numerous acronyms that may be unclear to individuals not engaged in daily Ongo activities. It was requested that all acronyms should be written out in full when first mentioned in reports.

Agreed Committee:

- noted the progress made across all areas of Customer Engagement activity for the period July to September 2025 and agreed to receiving this report quarterly.

7. Agenda item 7 – Our Neighbourhoods

Summary: Presentation of slides giving an overview of the Neighbourhoods Delivery Model early progress so far.

Discussion points/questions:

- The new model went live for the whole organisation on 1 October 2025.
- Feedback from surveys sent out in the last 30 days indicated that tenants welcomed the new approach and were on board to make it a success stating that increased visibility was a major plus. Early satisfaction figures show an increase around how ASB is dealt with and the number of days to resolve issues has reduced significantly. The figures presented in the January 2026 report will provide a more accurate reflection of the impacts.
- Maintenance went live with the new model 1 September 2025. Early operational improvements include work in progress numbers continuing to reduce, repairs completed in target improved from 66.2% in April-August to 71.7% and average days to complete repairs from 40.5 down to 37 days. The new model has increased customer satisfaction with repairs across all areas.
- A great amount of training and consultation has taken place with colleagues, including upskilling. Some re-structuring of Teams has also taken place. Support has been given to help them adjust to some big changes in their work environment. As with tenants, colleague feedback has been encouragingly positive.
- Regional Action Plans will be agreed between officers and tenants.



- The improved data we are receiving is helping to identify hotspots etc which enables us to be proactive in our approach and improve communication. Introduction of our customer hub centralises our support and gets our tenants to the right people at the right time.

Agreed: Committee

- noted the slides and the update given, discussing relevant points and agreed the report would be presented quarterly

8. **Agenda Item 8 – Operational Performance Report**

Summary: This report covers the financial year to 30 September 2025 and illustrates improving performance across operational areas; particularly in relation to reducing work in progress on repairs and transactional customer satisfaction. Additional insight on repairs performance is included as an appendix to this report. Satisfaction analysis within this report is up to the end of October and includes both transactional and perception-based Tenant Satisfaction Measures. This report provides a copy of Ongo's current performance measures that are provided to Homes Board for wider discussion and examples of other organisations ways of reporting that will support the wider Customer Focus Committee (CFC) workshop. Complaint handling is covered in the quarterly complaints report.

Discussion points/questions:

- Reports will become more detailed after the KPI session. Outstanding repairs have decreased and more repairs are now completed on time. Transactional satisfaction has remained above 90% for the past four months.
- A £500k Homes investment is helping to reduce WIP numbers, funding all areas and contractors. Resources shifted from voids to repairs, boosting customer satisfaction.
- The final 6% (600) of properties needing stock condition surveys will be completed by year end. No access issues are being looked at and it was discovered that a high proportion of these are working aged tenants so ways are being looked at to get around these issues whether it be offering later times in the day or even weekend appointments etc A workshop is planned to drill down how we can get to 100%. The new Neighbourhood Model should help with this by building more personal relationships with tenants.
- Tenant turnover remains low compared to the rest of the sector and call handling figures are improving due to the changes made. The longest call waiting time of 1 hr 27 minutes will be investigated and reported back to the Committee. **ACTION 22/25**
- Handling both emergency and non-emergency repairs together, instead of having a separate emergency team, is considered the most efficient use of resources.
- A member asked about the red areas on the TSM report and whether they indicate unrealistic targets, poor performance, or a combination of both? Engagement perception scores are quite low considering all the stuff we are doing-why? Communication? Steve Ellard explained it may be due to a lag between results; it takes time for the results of the changes made to filter through from surveys and that transaction satisfaction results are a clear, much more live indicator of an improving service. It was felt it was also about asking the right questions and managing tenant expectations.
- Committee were assured by a 3rd party report being brought to the January 2026 meeting.

- The number of voids is directly linked to the refocus of resources being moved to repairs and it is a case of getting the balance between the two areas right. This is being monitored and the hope is the new model will also help with this but should also note the above average performance when compare to wider sector.

Agreed: The Committee

- discussed the current position in terms of operational performance, noting exception reporting for indicators out of target (where appropriate)
- discussed the current Board performance measures and how they compare to other dashboards used across the sector and kindly provided by our in-sector housing colleagues
- noted and debated the most recent transactional and TSMs or October 2025.
- agreed the final list of committee members to take part in the workshop around developing our CFC performance dashboard.

9. **Agenda Item 9 – Complaints and Learning Update**

Summary: The Quarter two (July-September 2025) complaint report details our complaints performance and service improvements over the past three months across Ongo services. A full view of Ongo's complaints performance indicators can be reviewed in Appendix one

Key highlights of this quarter's performance include

- *Stage two complaint escalations have decreased this quarter*
- *Reduction in complaints for our in-house repairs service*
- *100% compliance on Housing Ombudsman orders*
- *Improved customer satisfaction across complaint handling on transaction surveys.*
- *Clear service improvement activity across our repairs and Maintenance services based on the feedback from tenants and customers.*

The report also includes the Housing Ombudsman's Landlord Report, this is an annual summary of complaints that have been escalated to investigation by the Housing Ombudsman and summary of the Housing Ombudsman findings. It sets out Ongos position in relation to the sector and similar sized organisation.

Discussion points/questions:

- There are no clear indicators to show why complaints have increased this last quarter other than more people have accessed the complaints service. Poor service delivery is not necessarily to blame. Communication is the top theme for complaints.
- There are now 3 complaints officers, one for each region, and a Complaints Feedback Manager.
- A Member raised concerns about including addresses in the HO case appendix and having tenant members on the Committee. It was clarified that the reports remain within the meeting pack and data protection is addressed by the Members' Code of Conduct.
- One of the cases highlighted had 4 complaints lodged for one property and more information was requested. Court proceedings were involved in this case and unreasonable tenant demands and behaviour, with 8 complaints coming in over a 5-6 week period and

these are escalated to HO every time. We acknowledge that there were some failings on our part but a lot of the complaints were down to unreasonable demands from the tenant.

Agreed: The Committee

- considered the contents of the report and agreed it gave assurance that complaint handling is effective and in line with the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling code
- provided scrutiny and challenge on the contents of the report to ensure appropriate actions are being taken to improve services.

10. Agenda Item 10 – Policy for Approval-Neighbourhood Management

Summary: The current Neighbourhood Management Policy was approved November 2022 by the Heads of Service Team. The policy has undergone a full review in line with the policy development framework. Community Voice has been consulted on this policy and its development in March 2025. The policy has received sign-off from the Leadership Team in line with the policy development framework.

Discussion points/questions:

- This policy was shaped by tenant feedback through focus groups and workshops, with language updated to align with neighbourhood consumer standards and approaches to ASB management to make the policy clearer on responsibilities.
- Usage of mobility scooters has raised some challenges around access to the scooters and considering other tenants health and safety. There is some work ongoing to engage with tenants and try to improve this situation. We have a scooter policy, but usage is increasing so this needs to be reviewed, consulting the regional managers.
- A Member felt the document was too “wordy”. A website light touch version was a possible option. Leaflets have been produced on how to be a good neighbour with salient points from the policy.
- ASB panels are being set up in each region to highlight examples and to teach what is and what isn’t classed as ASB.

Agreed: Committee

- approved the policy changes as detailed.
- noted that Ongo Homes Board has delegated approval of this policy to the Customer Focus Committee as detailed in the Standing Orders H1.3

11. Agenda Item 11 – Governance Update

Summary: The update provides details of the Appraisal Plans for committee members, the plans for the upcoming Committee Effectiveness Review and Board Member Training Plans for tenant members. Members should note this report is for information only

Discussion points/questions:

- Annual Appraisals will begin early in 2026. The Appraisal process is being reviewed to encompass feedback from all other sources
- A session was held after the last meeting to discuss how the Committee thought they were performing against the Standing Orders.

- All Members will be involved in the Committee Effectiveness Review.
- Tenant Committee Members will undergo training in January 2026 with the Board Development Agency looking at:
 - Introduction to Social Housing
 - Governance, Regulation and Compliance
 - Understanding Reports and Challenging Executives
 - How to balance strategic and operational focus and
 - Influencing Effectively (without resorting to power)

Agreed: Committee

- noted the Appraisal Plans for committee members
- noted the plans for the upcoming Committee Effectiveness Review
- noted the Board Member Training Plans for tenant members
- members noted this report is for information only

With no further business the meeting closed at 3.50pm

Signed by Chair: Judith Tomlinson

Date: 11 November 2025

As a true and correct record of the Ongo Homes Board meeting held on 11 November 2025

