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If you would like this publication in your language:

Se você gostaria deste folheto na sua língua, por favor ligue para 01724 279900 (Portuguese) আপুৰি আপুৰার ভাষায় এই লিফলেট চাৰ অৰগ্য করে আমাদের সাখে 01724 279900 (Bengali 如果您想本小册子在你的语言, 请致电 01724 279900 (Chinese)







A message from

Contact centre changes

We are making some changes to our customer contact centre to improve call wait times and the overall service that you receive.

We are seeing a higher than usual number of calls for this time of year and we know you are having to wait longer than we would like.

From September, the following changes are now in place:

- You can get in touch with us Monday to Thursday 9am -5pm, and Friday 9am – 4:30pm
- Urgent repairs calls will be prioritised between 9am -10am every day (you can use our digital channels during this time to report standard repairs), but you can still report emergencies at any time of the day

• All other calls will be taken after 10am if they are not an urgent repair

These changes have been influenced and agreed by Community Voice; our tenant decision-making group.

The changes we are making will ensure that calls are answered more quickly, especially if you have an urgent repair. We'll monitor these changes and any feedback to ensure that they are helping us to deliver the service we want to deliver, and the service you expect.



Check out more, including how this will help you.



Landlord Services survey

We're looking for your views on our landlord services to understand any changes we might need to make to help deliver a service you'd expect, in line with our three Corporate Plan objectives.

By taking part in the survey, you could be in with a chance of winning a £100 voucher!

Complete the survey!



You might see a team of Ongo colleagues in your area who will be knocking on doors to ask for your views. If you do see a colleague, please always ask for ID, they'll be happy to show it to you.



Repairs progress

Our repairs action group, which was set up at the start of 2024 to improve the service and reduce the length of time you had to wait for many repairs, has continued to develop.

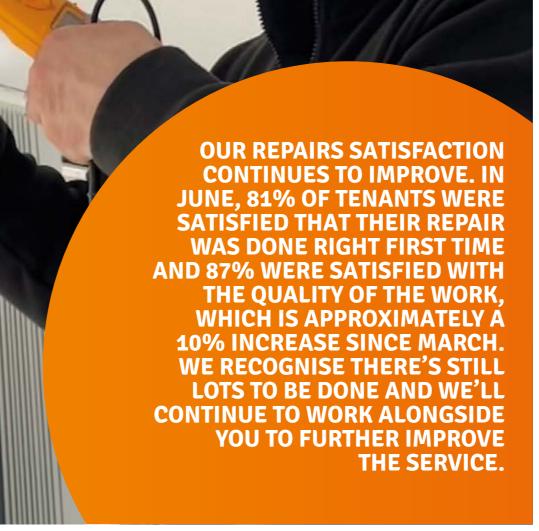
Outcomes since the last Key News are:

- Creating a geographical schedule for some non-emergency jobs to be more efficient and cut down travel time
- Reviewing our contractor use, and whether the work they do can instead be completed in-house



- ✓ Further promoting your responsibilities when it comes to repairs and providing guidance
- Enhanced training and development plans for colleagues to enable them to carry out the correct range of jobs







A welcome to Steve Ellard New Director of Property

Steve was previously the Director of Assets and Sustainability at Yorkshire Housing, and he joined Ongo in July.

- Q: Can you explain more about your role?
- A: It is to lead the repairs and maintenance service, plus the development and regeneration of all stock and communities.
- Q: What have you been up to so far, and what are you most looking forward to?
- A: I've been learning about and understanding each of the different service areas, specifically the challenges and where improvements can be made. I'm also passionate about the Net Zero journey, ensuring that we meet our environmental, sustainability and retrofit aims.
- Q: Any message to the readers?
- A: I'm excited about getting to grips with our biggest challenges and delivering even better services to our customers. Whether it's the development of new homes, investment in our existing homes or the day-to-day repairs service that you value so highly, I want Ongo to be delivering the best service in all of these areas.

There's pressure on the sector to illustrate that homes are decent and fit for residents – and rightly so. We'll be working hard to achieve this.

Get the latest updates and check out more information.

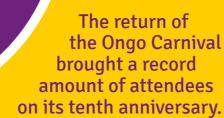






66 IT WAS A BRILLIANT DAY WITH LOTS TO TAKE PART IN AND ENJOY. YOU **DON'T GET MUCH FOR** FREE NOWADAYS, SO THE FACT THAT THERE'S ALL THIS WITHOUT HAVING **TO SPEND A PENNY IS REMARKABLE AND VERY MUCH APPRECIATED.**

Hayley Batty who attended with her son



More than 3,000 people enjoyed the free event which featured a range of activities, demonstrations, information stands and giveaways for all ages.









Support available

391 tenants accessed employment support, coaching and training in 2023/24 - an increase from 337 in 2022/23.



Housing Perks



Exclusively for housing association tenants, the app is free to use and allows you to use your discounts anytime. Retailers range from supermarkets such as Aldi, Tesco and Asda, online stores including Amazon and other popular stores such as Primark and Marks & Spencer.

Stewart, a tenant who regularly uses the platform, said: "Housing Perks has been a massive help to me. It's easy to download and use, there's a vast amount of retailers that you can save money with and I appreciate that there's help on hand if I do have any issues with the app."

Download Housing Perks on your app store and enter 'Ongo' into the organisation ID to sign up. You can also learn more, including a handy video and some





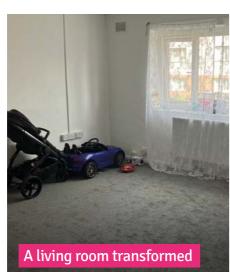


Improving Lives

Perks discounts.

A project to help new tenants with decorating, carpeting, life skills and any additional support has supported 20 people so far.

Caitlain, 21 from Grimsby, met our Skills & Personal Development team earlier this year where counselling support was put in place. Then, upon learning that she didn't have carpets in her home and it was affecting both her physical and mental health, she was referred to the Improving Lives project.



Carpets and underlay were quickly fitted, and additional funding was also obtained to furnish Caitlain's home with white goods and electrical items.

She said: "It's made me a lot happier – my home is now much warmer and I can really feel the difference. All of the support has been brilliant, including help to fill in forms for additional income that I didn't know I was entitled to.

"It was made clear straight away that it doesn't matter that I live outside of Scunthorpe. The same level of support is available for all tenants, and it was delivered in a way tailored to my needs.

"It's one of the best things that has happened to me, and my future looks a lot brighter now."

Discover more, including another case-study and the positive impact the project has made.



587

The amount of tenants currently signed up to Housing Perks.

Meeting needs

A new translation provider, AA Global, is being used to further ensure our services meet all language requirements.



It includes the ability to translate any document, use interpreters via various communication methods and deliver the translation services in a quick and efficient manner.

Please contact us using the details on page two.



this year from the Glasspool Charity Trust to support those

Glasspool funding

We received £150k earlier in financial hardship.

A maximum of £500 per household can be awarded, and requests can be made on the My Home app or through our Tenancy Sustainment team.

Paul, 47, received some vouchers earlier this year to help with gas, electric and food costs. He explained:

"I only became a tenant at the start of 2024, and to have support like this straight away meant a lot. It helped to ease any worries and set me up for the best possible start in my new home.

"Since then, I've benefitted from the range of volunteering opportunities that are available, something which has allowed me to build my skills and increase my confidence."

Sign up to your tenant app, My Home, at myhome.ongo.co.uk or download it on the app store. You can also request the funding by emailing enquiries@ongo.co.uk, contacting us on social media or calling 01724 279900.



If you are struggling, then you are not alone. We have a range of personalised support for you and your individual circumstances which will help to improve your situation. Learn more and see how we can help you.



New homes

"This home will help to set us up for a very happy future ahead."

Megan, tenant

A historic development

Our first build in North East Lincolnshire has been completed.

The 12 homes on Blackbird Close and House Martin Avenue. Waltham (near Grimsby), include four bungalows for wheelchair users, plus some spacious two and three-bed houses. Two homes are for shared ownership with the remaining 10 for affordable rent.

Megan and her two young children moved in at the end of July. She said: "We lived in a two-bed home before but needed a three-bed for my youngest son's needs, so this was an ideal opportunity and they're happy that they now have their own bedrooms.



We built

143

homes and started work on another 274 in 2023/24, up from 100 completed homes and 140 started on site in 2022/23.



"The whole process from start to finish was made incredibly easy. The home is within a peaceful community, it caters for all our needs and I'm now closer to family as well which is perfect.

"I particularly like how it's open-plan downstairs, so I can be doing things in the house whilst the kids are in the garden and still make sure they're okay."

Megan, tenant



Scunthorpe progress

10 homes behind the Lodge **Moor Community Centre** (Scunthorpe) are nearing completion in October.

They are a mixture of two and three-bed houses using a modern method of construction that ensures effective insulation and improved efficiency.

The homes are close to a variety of shops, schools and Scunthorpe United's ground. with regular public transport links to surrounding areas.

Building in Barrow

Two homes have been handed over in Barrow-upon-Humber, and two more are due to be finished in January 2025.

Work has also started in another local village, South Killingholme, on nine two-bed bungalows that are set to complete in February next year.

See the latest updates on our new homes.









92%

The amount of people satisfied with the quality of their new home between April 2023 and March 2024.

Getting you into work



Our Recruitment team focus on a personalised service, helping you to find rewarding job opportunities throughout the region.

It could be a permanent, temporary or apprenticeship role. In particular, they specialise in openings within health and social care, industrial and warehousing, construction and engineering, and public sector and administration.

They have strong links with a range of businesses in the local area. Also, working alongside the Recruitment team means you'll be helping to contribute to the reinvesting of profits back into the community. This helps to support various social initiatives, making a positive difference to the lives of individuals and families facing challenges.



Visit ongorecruitment.co.uk, email recruitment@ongo.co.uk or call 01724 844848 to begin your journey today.

Want to learn more about how they could help you?

John received support from the team to become a volunteer and increase his skills before securing a full-time job. At the same time, his mental health was totally transformed with a brighter future ahead.



The allotments saved my life.

Check out John's inspiring story.



Dine (ongo)
and Dance

WEDNESDAY 20 NOVEMBER 10m-4pm

HESLAM PARK RUGBY CLUB SCUNTHORPE

The festive Dine and Dance is for our tenants living in our independent living schemes and those tenants who are over the age of 55 who would normally spend Christmas alone.







Places are limited and it's first come first served, so don't miss out! Closing date is Friday 18th October 2024.

If you'd like to find out more about the event and to book a place, contact us:

customer.engagement@ongo.co.uk | 01724 279900

Helping the local environment

An improvement project was held at Oasis **Academy Parkwood (Scunthorpe) to brighten** the school's grounds.

- ✓ Built and installed bird boxes, bug hotels and hedgehog houses
- ✓ Converted previously barren green-spaces into areas where an array of colourful plants will grow
- Erected and installed planters
- ✓ Painted fences in vibrant multi-colours

Tami, a tenant whose daughter attends the school, commented: "This work has made a huge difference in revitalising the space.

"One of the most important benefits is the long-term impact that it will have for the children. They will learn a lot about biodiversity and how to live greener, plus they'll take pride in helping to maintain it in years to come."

Another project is also taking place at Oasis Academy **Henderson Avenue (Scunthorpe)** which will include tree planting.

Influencing change

Our Net Zero Policy and action plan have been updated.

It sets out a clearer direction for how we contribute to improving the environment and reducing our carbon footprint. The tenant-led Sustainability & Environmental Panel will then help to monitor progress and provide insights from a tenant perspective.

This is just one of the many ways in which you can contribute and help us to improve for the future. You can dedicate what

time you're able to, it's a great way to learn and receive the latest updates, plus you can enhance your CV and make friends with like-minded people.

Visit ongo.co.uk/getinvolved to start your journey today.

Discover more about our environmental work and Net Zero aims.



11 neighbourhood environmental projects were completed during 2023/24.







They are:

- Nicola Heywood-Cleverly Ongo Homes Board Member / Member of Governance & Remuneration Committee
- Matt Sugden Ongo Homes Board Member / Member of Commercial Board
- Tracy O'Neill A previous Independent Member who is now an Ongo Homes Board Member / Member of Developments Board
- Tom Pratt Independent Member of Commercial Board
- Judith Tomlinson Co-opted role on Ongo Homes Board

- Ovidiu Staicu Independent Member of Ongo Developments
- Lisa Whelan

A previous Board Trainee who is now an Independent Member of Governance & Remuneration Committee

- Thabiso Dube **Board Trainee**
- Charmaine Mande **Board Trainee**

A key focus was to improve the diversity on our Boards, making them more representative of people who consider themselves to be from black and ethnic minorities or disabled.

We also wanted people with first-hand experience of living in an Ongo home and using our services. Judith and Charmaine are both tenants, so their involvement in decision-making at Board level will be essential.

Head to ongo.co.uk/board for more details.

"My experiences of being a tenant will hopefully help in influencing future improvements for the benefit of all residents."

Judith, tenant co-opted **Board member**

The 2024 EDI Bubble has been published! It celebrates key achievements, looks at what the EDI steering group has done, plus changes and improvements made along with future plans.







Involved with Ongo

You said, we are doing

Thanks to our tenant-led Resident Scrutiny Panel, recommendations from three of their latest investigations have led to many improvements. See below for some examples:

Damp & Mould

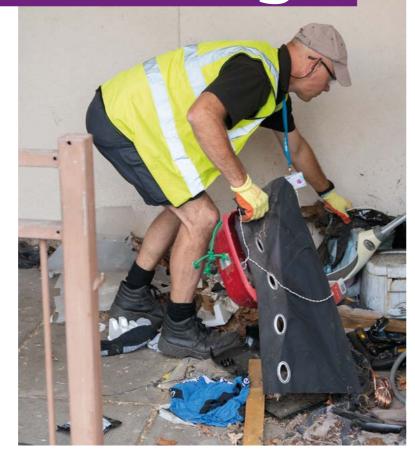
- The damp & mould policy now include types of damp and a commitment to training for colleagues
- A risk rating document is now used to identify the severity of damp & mould, the exposure level and the risk posed to those with vulnerabilities
- Clearer timescales are now in place so tenants have greater clarity of what to expect

Anti Social Behaviour (ASB)

- An acknowledgement is now sent to the tenant explaining that their case has been received
- Each case now has an agreed timescale for updating the tenant on progress

Repairs

- The use of videos on the website has been expanded to help when reporting repairs
- Customer advisor scripts have been revised so that the tenant is asked the right questions to check for disabilities/vulnerabilities



 When a job is referred to a contractor, the tenant now receives a text advising them of this along with who the contractor is, how the contractor can be contacted and when the tenant can expect to be contacted

55% of customers were satisfied with how their ASB case was dealt with 2023/24. Though this was an increase from 48% in 2022/23, it is still way below our target of 85% and will be a main focus of improvement.



Tenants influence changes

Consultation with residents at 13 retirement schemes on the communal cleaning service has led to several changes.

Some hours of cleaning were altered across many of the schemes, meaning reduced service charges, whilst one scheme are now receiving additional cleaning time following tenant feedback which will improve their service.



Acting on feedback

Following issues raised by our Tenant Inspectors on an estate inspection, the Neighbourhood Services team held a targeted project on Selby Court (Scunthorpe).

The work included resolving flytipping, clearing green-spaces and paths, pruning trees and hedges, plus removing ivy to help tidy up the community.

The Tenant Inspectors carry out monthly inspections of areas across the region to ensure they are maintained to a high standard and that any issues are swiftly resolved.







residents were involved in consultation groups (including digital) in 2023/24 compared to 563 the previous year.

Take a look at the updated **Customer Engagement handbook** to see how you too could make a difference in the community.





In the community

Action days have taken place in Epworth (July) and New Westcliff in Scunthorpe (August) to speak with residents, share information and carry out neighbourhood improvements.

Outcomes included:

- Repair and community issues actioned and resolved
- Archways painted
- Pathways edged
- Litter collected

Partnership working with the Police, Safer Neighbourhoods and North Lincolnshire Council to identify concerns and put plans in place



There's a range of tenant groups and opportunities to improve services that can fit in around your other commitments.

Learn more about how you can have a say and help to influence change.













his time we're focusing on Scunthorpe and St John's Market in the heart of the town.



All about Scunthorpe

Scunthorpe is an industrial gem nestled within North Lincolnshire. It has a growing reputation for the arts, with plenty of things to do locally.

A spotlight on St John's Market in Scunthorpe

St John's is a market in the town centre which combines the charm of a traditional market with a contemporary twist.

It's a great place for food, handmade gifts, clothing, collectibles and other essential items that you maybe can't find anywhere else.



Head upstairs for the food court and a FREE play area called the 'Mini Market' for children up to eight years old. A tabletop sale, 'Bargain Alley', is also held every Saturday with tables available from just £5.25 (email markets@northlincs.gov.uk to reserve a space).

Open from 8am – 5pm, Tuesday to Saturday, the market is ideally situated next to the bus station and close to several car-parks with two hours free parking during the week (free all day on Saturdays).







1,000 appointments were missed in June for contractors to carry out essential compliance and safety checks.



The checks are to keep you, your family and community safe. Please allow access to carry out these necessary visits or rearrange your appointment if they are not suitable.

Less missed appointments means more resources can be invested in improving services, providing support and offering opportunities to help you.

100% of all relevant safety checks were completed within timescales during 2023/24.



Did you know?

Our Residents Building Safety Group needs more tenants to join.

- ✓ Find out the latest updates and ask questions
- ✓ Influence improvements where you live and help others
- ✓ Meet like-minded people and make friends
- ✓ Add to your CV by volunteering and giving back to the community

It only takes a couple of hours every three months, and no specific skills are needed just the passion to make a difference.

Discover more and register your interest.



Making your home smarter

An update on the three projects and looking ahead to future plans

Air source heat pumps and smart thermostats

Controls temperature in the home at the touch of a button, monitors heating effectiveness and highlights property issues.

- Data is being reviewed (such as survey responses and contacting them with next steps, where the system could be used more efficiently and comparing effectiveness in different types of homes) to offer guidance
- Tenants continue to download and use the app which allows remote setting of the heating at anytime
- Surveys and extra information, including the support that's available, are being sent directly to the devices

149 homes

have a Switchee smart thermostat installed.

Damp & mould smart sensors

Identifies the early onset of issues, sends alerts and provides guidance to resolve.

 Issues and potential risks are being triaged direct to specialist teams leading to swift, proactive resolution

- Working alongside the use of video technology to get a better understanding of issues and give tailored support
- Increased use of the tenant app to check condition of the home at anytime and what can be done to improve

"I now have much better visibility of my home, with the suggestions from the app being really helpful. It's also given me peace of mind regarding the indoor air quality and my child who has chest issues has seemed in better health because of the improved ventilation."

Emma Rayner-Gray, tenant

"I had an issue with a downpipe and drain outside my home. Rather than waiting for a visit, using the technology saved a lot of time. It allowed

me to show the advisor exactly what the problem was, and the repair was then swiftly carried out.

"I'll definitely use it again in the future and I'd encourage others to as well."

Deanne Ferguson, tenant

As of mid-September, video technology has been used 704 times.

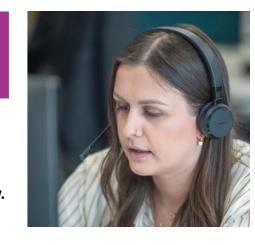


sensor installed.

Video technology

The ability to view an issue through a smart device, diagnose and resolve effectively.

- Additional departments are now trialling the technology to identify needs and provide support
- Leading to more first-time resolution and, in some cases, tenants resolving issues themselves



Learn more about the projects and the impact they are making.



Games corner

Wordsearch

Mr and Mrs Ongo Bear loved the tenth Carnival! Find the following words:

> **ACTIVITIES** ANIMALS **DANCING FREEBIES FUNFAIR GAMES** INFORMATION **MEMORIES** MUSIC **PERFORMANCES PHOTOS REFRESHMENTS**

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J	ı	В	N	Ε	G	0	R	Α	S	٧	I	R
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Spot the difference

Mr and Mrs Ongo Bear will be heading to a Halloween event. They have pictured the scene, but it has been altered and there are now eight differences.

Can you help find them all?





















fomemade iffee apples



Ingredients (makes 8)

8 apples

4

- 400g golden caster sugar
- 1 tsp vinegar
- 4 tbsp golden syrup
- 8 skewers or lolly sticks
- 100ml water



0

Email editor@ongo.co.uk with your pics of the finished toffee apples and any ideas for future recipes.



Method

- 1. Place the apples in a large bowl, then cover with boiling water (you may have to do this in two batches). This will remove the waxy coating and help the caramel to stick.
- 2. Dry thoroughly and twist off any stalks. Push a wooden skewer or lolly stick into the stalk end of each apple.
- **3.** Lay out a sheet of baking parchment paper and place the apples on this, close to your stovetop. Tip the sugar into a pan along with the water and set over a medium heat. Cook for five minutes until the sugar dissolves, then stir in the vinegar and syrup.
- **4.** Set a sugar thermometer in the pan and boil to 150°C or 'hard crack' stage. If you don't have a thermometer, you can test the toffee by pouring a little into a bowl of cold water. It should harden instantly and, when removed, be brittle and easy to break. If you can still squish the toffee, continue to boil it.
- **5.** Working guickly and carefully, dip and twist each apple in the hot toffee until covered. Let any excess drip away, then place on the baking parchment to harden. You may have to heat the toffee a little if the temperature drops and it starts to feel thick.
- **6.** Leave the toffee to cool before eating. They can be made up to two days in advance and should be stored in a dry place.





We have linked up with Scunthorpe United to offer 50 free tickets for each home game this season.

Fixtures will be grouped into four separate ticket releases throughout the year (the remaining ones are 4 November, 6 January 2025 and 17 February 2025). To apply, you must fill in a form which will go live on our website three weeks prior to the first game in each release. You can apply for up to four tickets in total and they will be awarded on a first-come, first-serve basis.

