

# YOUR VOICE.

September 2023

Welcome to our latest edition of Your Voice. We hope you are all well and enjoyed the burst of sunshine we had earlier in the month, it most definitely feels like Autumn is with us now though.

The Customer Engagement Team have been out and about over the last few months, working with our neighbourhood teams to carry out local walkabouts, it was great to see many of you getting involved. Meeting up with us to walk around your neighbourhood allows us to pick up on issues and identify solutions. If you haven't already attended one, make sure you keep a look out for when one is taking place in your area.

Read on to find out what's been happening and the up-and-coming involvement opportunities.

Jo Phillips,  
Customer Engagement Manager

## SOCIAL HOUSING REGULATOR SURVEY.

Over the next few weeks you may be contacted by telephone to participate in a Tenant Satisfaction Measure questionnaire. The social housing regulator requires a sample of residents to be surveyed about their satisfaction with our services. This is an important opportunity for you to have your voice heard and contribute to improving the quality of our services.

A representative may contact you by telephone and ask you a series of questions about your experience with our services. The survey will take approximately 10 - 15 minutes to complete.

The results of the survey will be shared with all our customers next year, and will be used to inform our efforts to improve our services. We appreciate your participation and look forward to hearing your feedback.



# HAVE YOUR SAY.

The Regulator of Social Housing is currently running a consultation on the revised Consumer Standards – these are the rules about homes and services tenants can expect from landlords when they live in social housing. The revised standards aim to drive improvements in the safety and quality of homes and services.

There are [4 Standards](#) that the Regulator is seeking your views about, these are focussed on

1. Good and Safe Homes
2. Good relationships with tenants
3. Safe and well-kept neighbourhoods
4. Renting homes to tenants

Have a read of the standards and then get involved [here](#)



Regulator of  
Social Housing

## The Onward Academy

The Onward Academy is a new network of organisations we are working to build that will use their individual expertise to deliver employment and training for our customers. This network will enable Onward to facilitate apprenticeships, training and work experience opportunities for our customers that will lead them into work.

We want our customers to help influence and shape the Onward Academy programmes. We have already delivered 3 pilot training and employment programmes with support from the Learning Foundry, Procure Plus and some of our local suppliers.

The programmes have created a positive impact for our customers and led some of them into employment opportunities.

We now want to hear from our other customers to understand the type of support and opportunities you need so we can build the right network of partners and provide training and work experience opportunities that meet your needs.

Answer a few short questions [here](#).

If you would like to find out more about the Onward Academy and to help influence the types of training and employment opportunities, we can develop then please contact [Leanne.Baldwin@onward.co.uk](mailto:Leanne.Baldwin@onward.co.uk)

## WE ARE REVIEWING OUR CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT POLICY.

Who better to review our policy than you, our Customer Engagement Community members! Keep your eyes out for our survey in September, we would love to hear what you have to say and any suggestions you have on how deliver our Customer Engagement Service.

We will also be running a session online for those customers who have actively been involved over the past year. This session is on Tuesday 3rd October at 2pm on MS Teams, if you are an active member of one of our forums and would like to get involved then sign up [here](#).

**Four Million Homes**

Knowledge and action for change in social housing

# CHECK OUT FOUR MILLION HOMES.

If you haven't already, check out [Four Million Homes](#) . Funded by the Government, Four Million Homes provides free knowledge, guidance and training for residents.

## UP AND COMING TRAINING COURSES

All the training courses are delivered face to face, and provide you with a great opportunity to deepen your understanding of social housing and meet up with other residents.

Some of the courses being offered over the coming months are..

- Residents Panels
- How to run an effective Residents Association
- Social Housing Legal Requirements

“ It was interesting to meet up with other tenants. There were some tenants from one housing association who were fully involved and one group who from another housing association who feel they are excluded (from their landlords activities). So there was a wide range of opinion. There were examples of landlord's good and poor practice. ”

**Michael - Customer Engagement Community Member**

In addition to the face-to-face courses, there are also webinars and other useful resources that you are free to access.

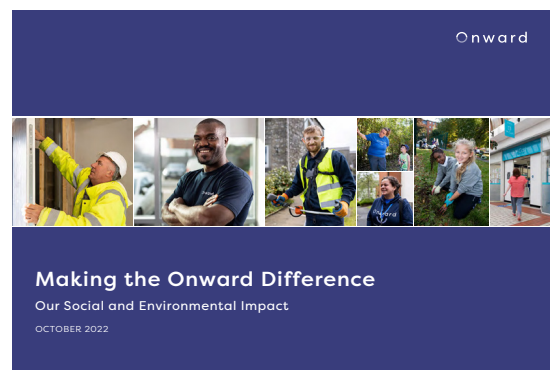
# INTERESTED IN ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY?

**Onward have a Sustainability Strategy covering our homes, our services and the way we work.**

Last year we reported for the first time on progress against our [environmental and social goals](#).

If you have an interest in environmental issues, sustainability or the move to zero carbon email us at [customerengagement@onward.co.uk](mailto:customerengagement@onward.co.uk) and let us know what you are interested in.

We'll keep hold of your name and then let you know if there is anything we are doing that you could be involved in. Also keep an eye on future editions of Your Voice.



# OUR CUSTOMERS HAVE TALENT!

Gary is a member of the Customer Engagement Community with a keen eye for fantastic wildlife photography.

At a young age Gary was interested in photography but his career as a chef took him away from it. When he had to stop working due to ill health, he took up his hobby again. These photographs have been taken from the comfort of Gary's home. With the support of his brother he enjoys visiting Burscough wetlands centre as there are plenty of places to rest. The parks of Liverpool also bring some excellent images to capture so he will visit them when he can.

Gary shares his photos with his scheme manager Chris who is a huge support and has encouraged him in his hobby. The fellow residents also like to see Gary's most recent images and are proud of his hobby. In the future Gary hopes to have some of his work featured in a Liverpool gallery.

**“ It's a lovely hobby and a pleasure to do. ”**



Do you have a talent or hobby to showcase to your fellow Customer Engagement Community members, email Leanne: [leanne.baldwin@onward.co.uk](mailto:leanne.baldwin@onward.co.uk)



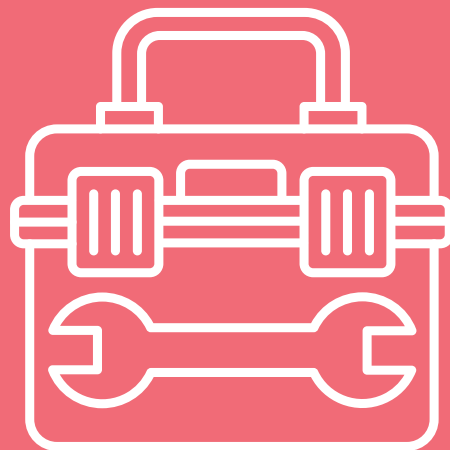
**NATIONAL  
SCRUTINY  
WEEK.**

This year, we are taking part in National Scrutiny Week. The week is being coordinated by Tpas. As member of Tpas we can join all the virtual events as part of the week for free. It's a chance for us to celebrate the impact of our scrutiny work and learn about how other organisations work in partnership with their tenants too. We are looking forward to hearing back from members of our Scrutiny Board about all they have learned at the annual Scrutiny Conference.

Visit [www.tpas.org.uk](http://www.tpas.org.uk) to register for your account to access the free events.

# WANT TO HELP BUILD THE NEW REPAIRS SERVICE?

We know repairs is the most important service for most of our customers. Onward Scrutiny Board members met with Onward Managers over the summer to make recommendations about communication in the repairs service. These recommendations were developed after looking at performance figures and complaints from customers, and talking to both contractors and Onward staff about the service



The ideas will feed into the ongoing Onward Repairs Improvement Project. We are now looking for more customers to participate in future sessions. If you can bring a positive, constructive viewpoint to improving the service for all then drop us a line [val.alker@onward.co.uk](mailto:val.alker@onward.co.uk) or call 0300 555 0600

## A BIGGER CUSTOMER VOICE.

Joe and Edith, were the first Scrutiny Board members to take part in the new Onward Customer Committee, that is made up of Onward Board and Executive Team members. This Sub Committee of the Onward Board oversees all the services that our customers receive.

Scrutiny members have a full role in the Committee, they provide feedback from the Scrutiny Board and can comment on or question all reports to the Committee.

The Customer Committee gives customers a bigger voice in Onward.

“ Edith: It was participatory, I felt valued in the meeting.  
Joe: We played a significant part in the meeting. ”

Some of the key discussions focussed on:

- innovations to improve efficiency
- improved handling of customer complaints
- renewal of energy contracts
- service performance

## PRIZE DRAW WINNERS:

Jun-23	Mr Dawson	Lancashire
Jul-23	Mr Ayub	Lancashire
Aug-23	Mr Jackson	Manchester



“ I have been with Onward for about 10 years and have enjoyed our partnership, if I needed any repairs they have been done to a high satisfactory level, I like the email site for reporting any jobs it saves time on the phone, keep up the good work.

I have recently retired from 20 years working at GMP before that I worked for 24 years in Royal Mail, I enjoyed both jobs... Recently I worked for a month invigilating at a local secondary school. ”

**Mr Jackson**

As a Customer Engagement Community member you are automatically entered into our monthly prize draw, winners are selected at random and contacted by Leanne.

# OUT AND ABOUT.



Windmill Hill, Runcorn



Clitheroe

Onward Scrutiny Board recommended more estate walkabouts in their review of Neighbourhood working last year, and since then there have been lots of positive and productive Estate Inspections happening across Onward.

The Neighbourhood team in Windmill Hill Runcorn, together with our Environmental Services and Social Investment team and local councillors, joined customers on an inspection of the estate to talk about issues concerning them in their area. Issues raised included fly tipping, overgrown bushes and blocked out streetlights – all of which have now been raised with the appropriate teams and are being actioned.

We are excited to share with you our recent visit to Ridgeway Park in Trafford. Our team, alongside the Neighbourhood and Safer Neighbourhood Teams, had the pleasure of meeting many of our customers who came out to share their concerns about the area and bring attention to issues in their neighbourhood. We listened intently and have put an action plan in place, working diligently across several departments to address these concerns and improve our services.

We value the feedback of our customers and hope to continue actively listening to better serve all our neighbourhoods. As part of our efforts, we are also supporting Estate Inspections, engaging with customers to make positive differences in their neighbourhoods.

In other news, we recently held a gardening competition (pictures below), and we were thrilled to receive entries from our community members in Clitheroe. We also had the pleasure of a drive-by from Onward Repairs. Keep an eye out for your invitation to join in on the fun. Thank you for your continued support with these projects.

