



# Onward

Creating positive spaces

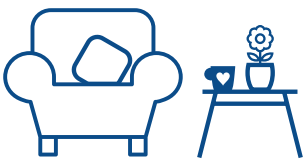


## Annual Customer Report

2018/19

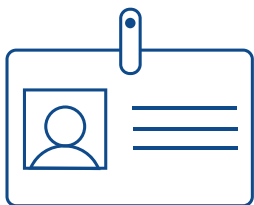


# Welcome to our annual report to customers.



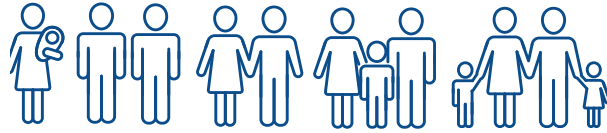
**28,161 Homes**

We are delighted to share with you what has been happening here at Onward and the progress we are making to improve our services and build more homes.



**771 Employees**

We have a fantastic team of colleagues, all of whom have a passion to do great things for our customers. Going the extra mile is common place and we are proud of the progress we have made so far. We know we still have a long way to go to improve the service in some areas and we are working with both colleagues and customers to do this.



**57,000 customers**

This year **500** customers have volunteered to provide feedback which shapes our services. Resident Scrutiny boards have been actively engaged and have recently started to develop a much closer working relationship with the main Onward Board. We were delighted that some customers were able to join us at our colleague conference this year to give their views on our service and how we could improve.

In addition to the work of our scrutiny boards, over **7,500** of you have recently provided feedback through our survey of tenants and residents. Thanks to all of you who did participate, we will be sharing the results of this survey with you shortly.



**£146.8m  
annual  
turnover**

**Our social purpose means we invest every penny we receive in rent into good quality homes and services. Our aims are:**

- to become the social landlord of choice – delivering great service every time
- to improve the experience of customers in our neighbourhoods and
- to grow in areas where we can make a positive difference.



**55 Neighbourhoods**

We believe that our objectives are focussed on the areas that are important to you and we will report progress regularly through our quarterly customer reports.

Thank you for taking the time to read this report. I hope you enjoy it and find it useful.

**Bronwen Rapley**  
Chief Executive

# 2018: Our journey.



## Onward became a unified organisation.

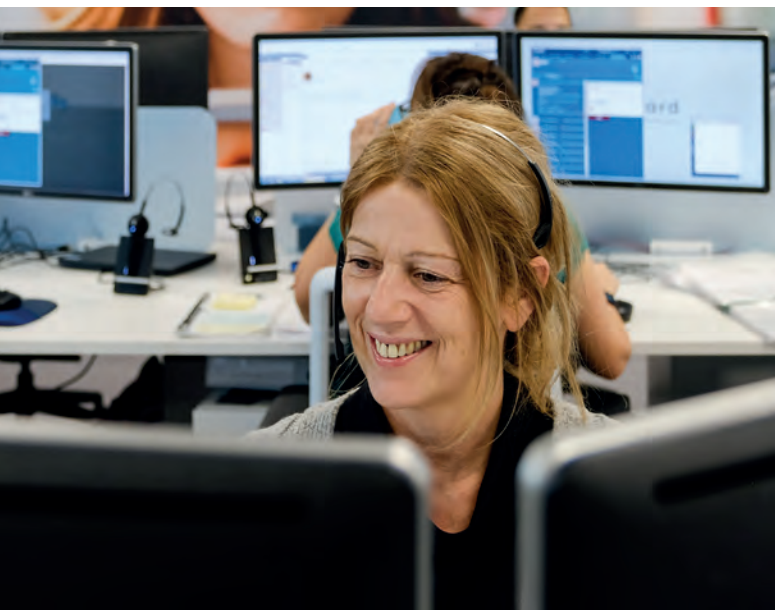
Operating with one Board as one organisation has allowed us to become stronger and more efficient. This has given us opportunities to improve the services that we deliver to our customers along with the ability to build more homes.



## My Onward.

A growing number of you are active online and are looking to self-serve so in April 2018 we launched a new website and customer self-service portal. During the last year, over 7500 customers signed up and began using 'My Onward'.

'My Onward' allows customers to log into their online account and check their rent balance, report repairs and update their personal details. If you haven't already signed up visit [www.onward.co.uk](http://www.onward.co.uk)



## We established a single contact centre.

We know that you like to talk to us by telephone so we have established a new single contact centre that can deal with many of your enquiries at the first point of contact.

Based in Accrington our contact centre dealt with over **435,000** customer enquiries during 2018/19. Over **300,000** of these enquires came via telephone.



## New homes.

Building new homes is important to us and supports the wider demand for housing across the country. It also meets our aspiration to promote regeneration in areas we can make a positive difference.

In 2018/19 we completed the build of **101** new homes and had a further **325** under development. Plans have moved forward to help us achieve our target of building **1600** homes by **2023**.

## Onward Living.

We launched our new dedicated homeownership brand and team, Onward Living.

Whether you're looking to buy a new home, share in the ownership or rent to buy over time, Onward Living may have the right product to suit you. Further information is available [www.onward-living.co.uk](http://www.onward-living.co.uk)



# Customer engagement.



You love to provide us with feedback wherever you can and we love to listen. We've developed lots of ways you can do this.

We've recruited over **500** customers to our engagement community who want to engage and work with us to influence delivery and shape our services.

*On the opposite page we set out the ways you can be involved.*

## Any other way?

Tell us how you want to get involved and work with us to shape services and neighbourhoods. Please contact our Customer Engagement Team: [CustomerEngagement@onward.co.uk](mailto:CustomerEngagement@onward.co.uk) or call us on **0300 555 0600** for more information.



### ONLINE ENGAGEMENT

We recognise that not all customers have the time to meet with us to share their views, we are therefore developing more and more ways for tenants to engage with us digitally. We use film, social media, online surveys, our website and 'My Onward' portal to keep tenants engaged and updated.



### COMPLETING A SURVEY

We often use surveys to seek customers' views on our services. These will be short online, telephone or face to face surveys that only take a few minutes to complete.



### SERVICE SHAPERS

We want customers to influence the way we in which we develop and deliver our services and have created opportunities for them to work with us to:

- Review our policies, procedures and publications
- Procure new contractors
- Shape neighbourhood plans and priorities



### SERVICE INSPECTORS

We regularly create opportunities for our customers to carry out inspections e.g on our cleaning and environmental services, on our ready to let homes and on customer services. There are also opportunities to work with other tenants and carry out customer surveys to support the work of of our Regional Scrutiny Boards.



### TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT

We offer training that provides customers with opportunities for learning and developing new skills. Training can also help build up confidence, enhance employment opportunities and is also a great way to meet new people.



### REGIONAL SCRUTINY BOARDS

RSBs are independent groups of customers who regularly meet with us to review how we are performing against our targets and service standards. They will make recommendations for improvements, highlight great work and monitor progress.

Over the year, our Scrutiny Board members have been challenging us improve our repairs and grounds maintenance services.



### NEIGHBOURHOOD SHAPERS

Do you want to make a difference in your neighbourhood? There are lots of different ways that you can work with us to to make your neighbourhood a better place to live e.g join us on an environmental walkabout or meet with us to discuss local issues and priorities.



### TENANTS AND RESIDENTS ASSOCIATIONS (TRA)

TRAs are run by local people who want to make things better where they live. Meetings give neighbours the opportunity to discuss local important matters. TRAs are able to apply for funding to support local projects and initiatives. We are able to put you in touch with your local TRA, if there isn't one we can support you to set one up.



### COMMUNITY PROJECTS & LOCAL EVENTS

Throughout the year there will be opportunities to get involved in community projects and events. eg community clean-ups, local campaigns, fun days or seasonal events that brings a community together.



## Repairs service.

We have re-let our responsive repairs and gas servicing contracts. Our new arrangements will maintain the high quality repairs service that you have been used to and will be accessible, convenient to help keep your home safe and in an excellent condition.

The new repairs service brings the opportunity to make use of new technology which will help track your repairs.

Additionally, our repairs partners are committed to providing local employment opportunities.

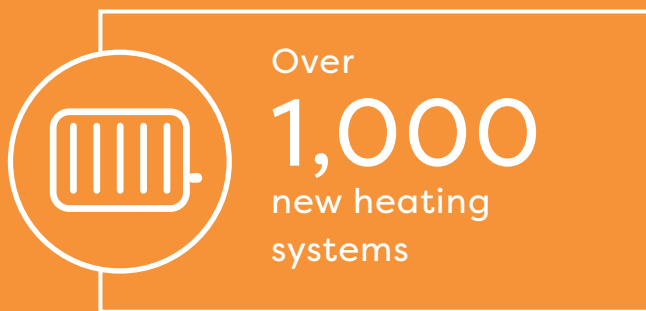
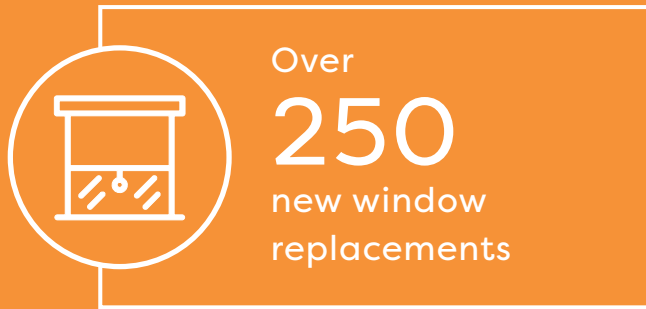


# Investing in your home.

We have invested over **£28m** in undertaking almost **100,000** repairs which helped to keep your home in a good condition.

**£17.9m** has been spent on improvement work to **3,900** homes.

This includes:



We have also invested **£4.7m** in fire safety works and this remains a priority for the coming year

# Some examples of what we've done.



Developed **55** neighbourhood plans to help make a difference where we can. These include things such as: grass cutting and grounds maintenance and communal Cleaning for example.



Carried out over **1000** communal inspections every month which has helped keep your homes clean and safe.



Given **2400** people keys to their new home.



Installed **50** sprinkler systems into high rise properties.



Planted over **2000** trees around your neighbourhoods.



Successfully managed **1335** cases of antisocial behaviour to ensure that are neighbourhoods are safe places to live in



## Hattersley and Mottram residents get online

Residents got the chance to brush up on their IT skills, thanks to a free social media workshop organised by Onward. To help support continued learning, they got to take home the laptop after the course.

## Residents saddle up for cycle recycle.

Bikes destined for landfill got a facelift thanks to a community project which aims to improve skills organised by Onward's 1st Call project – residents were able to keep the bikes too.



## Take a bite out of this healthy cooking course.

A healthy eating family cookery course at the May Logan centre helped Onward customers get confident in the kitchen.

## Hattersley FC scores new kit thanks to Onward

Onward stepped in to support a local community football club in Tameside, supplying them with new strips and training gear.



You can find more great news stories at [www.onward.co.uk](http://www.onward.co.uk)



## Supporting you.

We were able to provide financial support and advice to over 1000 customers, helping to generate £2m of additional income for them.

We spent £836k adapting customers' homes to help them to live interdependently and in comfort

We introduced The Noise app which has helped to simplify noise reporting and investigations.

We supported over 1000 customers to access personal development, skills and training courses and helped 45 customers back into employment.

# Our performance.

 Income	2017/18	2018/19
--	---------	---------

Income collection	<b>99.9%</b>	<b>100.2%</b>
Current tenant arrears	<b>4.79%</b>	<b>4.98%</b>

We improved income collection last year, although we did see a slight rise in arrears which will be focusing on this year.

 Lettings & turnover	2017/18	2018/19
---	---------	---------

Average relet time (excluding major repairs)	<b>43.7</b> days	<b>49.1</b> days
Average relet time (general needs only)	<b>32.6</b> days	<b>29.3</b> days

We saw excellent progress in the time it takes us to re-let most of our properties (for general needs). We were also able to let a number of supported properties that had been empty for some time. Although this good news had an impact on our figures (as the long periods when these properties were empty increases the average re-let time) it is still good news that empty homes are being brought back into use more quickly.

 Repairs <small>Completed within target timescales</small>	2017/18	2018/19
--	---------	---------

All repairs	<b>87.8%</b>	<b>85.5%</b>
Emergency repairs	<b>90%</b>	<b>90.6%</b>
Urgent repairs	<b>85.8%</b>	<b>81.1%</b>
Routine repairs	<b>88.1%</b>	<b>85.1%</b>

Repairs performance deteriorated slightly and this was largely due to the fact that we were preparing to move to new contractors which we did in April 2019. This is a major change and we recognise that there have been some difficulties in embedding the new contracts. However we are confident that the new arrangements will ultimately deliver a much improved service and that we will meet our targets.

 Compliance	2017/18	2018/19
--	---------	---------

Gas inspections on time	<b>99.92%</b>	<b>100%</b>
-------------------------	---------------	-------------

We were delighted to achieve 100% gas compliance at the end of March when all of our homes with gas had an up to date gas safety certificate.

This year we have been putting the building blocks in place to improve our performance – the contact centre, new responsive repair contracts and My Onward are a big part of that. We are not yet providing the level of customer service we want to but we are on the way.

More information on how we have learnt from your complaints will be provided in our Annual Complaints Report (available later this year).

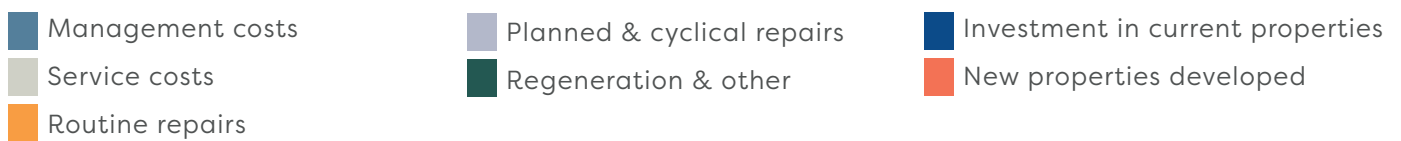
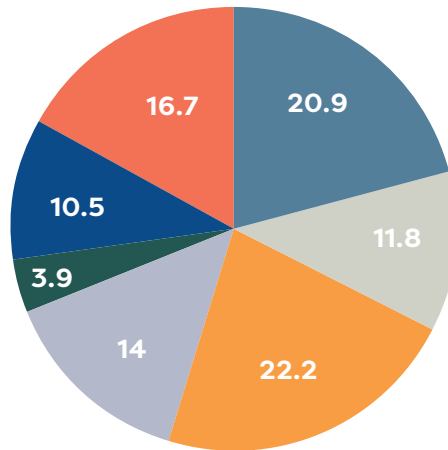
# Financial strength.

We have performed well financially this year. More details are available in our Annual Report & Financial Statements, which can be found at [www.onward.co.uk](http://www.onward.co.uk)

The statements also set out how we look to make best use of our resources and deliver value for money.

## How your have spent your money this year:

(Pence spent in every pound)



Income	£m
Turnover	146.8
Gain from disposal of housing properties	2.8
<b>Total income</b>	<b>149.6</b>

Costs	£m
Management costs	26.8
Service costs	15.0
Routine repairs	28.6
Planned & cyclical repairs	17.9
Housing depreciation	19.7
Other costs	3.7
Regeneration & development	1.4
Servicing loans (net interest)	21.3
<b>Total costs</b>	<b>134.4</b>
Put into reserves for the future	15.2

# What's the plan for 2019/20?

Listening and learning from your experience is really important to us and we know we have more work to do.

Recently, over 7000 customers took part in the Big Onward Conversation. This was a survey issued to all Onward customers, seeking your views and opinions across the range of services we provide. We will be using the data and customer feedback to inform future plans and priorities.

We will be sharing the results with you later this year.

**As part of our corporate plan, over the next year we will:**

- Improve the appointments performance of our new repairs service and make sure that your repairs are completed first time and to a high standard.
- Continue to improve the response time of our Contact Centre
- Keep your neighbourhoods safe, clean and tidy
- Build over 200 new homes
- Develop our Customer Charter that sets out our service standards
- Ensure feedback from our customers is used to influence neighbourhood plans and priorities.



## Tell us how we're doing.

We're always looking to improve our services with the help of satisfaction surveys, resident feedback, inspections and learning from complaints.

If you have any feedback about your experience of our services, or suggestions for improvement, we'd love to hear from you.

Email us at: [customerservices@onward.co.uk](mailto:customerservices@onward.co.uk) or call us on 0300 555 0600

## Making a complaint

We don't always get things right first time. If you do have any problems let us know and we'll do our best to rectify the problem quickly.

If you believe our service really hasn't been up to standard and you wish to make a formal complaint, you can contact us in one of the following ways:

Online	via the 'My Onward' portal
Over the phone	0300 555 0600
Email	<a href="mailto:customerservices@onward.co.uk">customerservices@onward.co.uk</a>
In writing	Onward Homes, 2 Christie Way, Renaissance Court, Manchester M21 7QY

We will respond to your complaint in line with our Complaints Policy.

If you would like to work with us to improve our services, why not join our Customer Engagement community?

Email us at: [customerengagement@onward.co.uk](mailto:customerengagement@onward.co.uk)