

# The Onward Newsletter

May 2022



## SPECIAL EDITION:

Your landlord,  
Your say!

Consultation on the  
Onward Homes Plan  
2022-2030

**ALSO INSIDE: HELP WITH THE COST OF LIVING**



# HELPING YOU WITH THE COST OF LIVING.

We know that life is getting more expensive and that some of our customers may need extra help to manage their money at this time. If you need some advice and support with managing your finances, we are here to help.

Our website is regularly updated with information about managing budgets, energy costs and details of other sources of support. Visit the [Support](#) section at [onward.co.uk](https://onward.co.uk) for information to help with the cost of living.

We can provide advice and support in accessing local grants, schemes or charities who offer free or affordable household items, including furniture packages.

We can also help with essential items through the **Onward Inclusion Fund**. This scheme is discretionary, so please speak to one of our [Financial Inclusion Specialists](#) for further information.

## Other help and support

The following may be available depending on where you live and your circumstances. Contact our Financial Inclusion team on **0300 555 0600** to find out more.

- The new **Household Support Fund** can support households in financial difficulty to meet daily needs such as food, clothing, and utilities.
- **Discretionary Housing Payments** can provide financial support to help with rent or housing costs.
- If you are on a low income, unemployed or in receipt of certain benefits you may be eligible for **Council Tax Support**.
- Every child in reception, year one and year two can receive a **free nutritious meal at school** at lunch time. Your child may also be able to receive free school meals if you are eligible for certain benefits.
- Some councils may provide help with **school uniform costs**.
- Your child may be entitled to **free childcare** if you are in receipt of certain benefits.

Onward's dedicated Financial Inclusion Team can provide you with advice and help you to access emergency support. Please contact our Financial Inclusion Team for free and confidential advice on **0300 555 0600** or email [FinancialInclusionTeam@onward.co.uk](mailto:FinancialInclusionTeam@onward.co.uk).

# MAKING THE ONWARD DIFFERENCE IN OUR COMMUNITIES.

The Onward Community Fund was launched in 2017 to provide support to community organisations and projects in our neighbourhoods across the North West.

Local groups can bid for up to £2,500 to help deliver a project that makes a positive difference to their communities.

In the last financial year, we awarded £100,141 in funding to 64 local community organisations, such as Longridge Community Arts in the Ribble Valley, who recently applied for funding to help create a new podcast for young people.

Got a great idea for a community project, but need a little help to get it off the ground? Whether it's a project to help with employment and training, provide youth provision or improve green spaces, we're looking to support ideas that will help you and your community.

Applications for the next round of funding will open on **Friday 1st July 2022**. Find out more today by emailing [socialinvestment@onward.co.uk](mailto:socialinvestment@onward.co.uk) or visit [onward.co.uk](https://onward.co.uk).



## VOLUNTEERING IN OUR COMMUNITIES.

Over the past year, Onward's volunteering programme has supported 76 worthwhile causes across Merseyside, Greater Manchester, Lancashire, and Cheshire, with colleagues providing over 900 hours of volunteering time.

Colleagues from across the organisation have been involved in a range of projects, including The Food Pantry in Salford, a service to help local people to purchase low-cost good quality food, run by St James Church who also offer space for people to access advice and support. Over in Merseyside, Onward supports Community Shop in Liverpool, an award-winning social enterprise and the UK's first social supermarket chain. In Lancashire, volunteers have supported Community Solutions North West, an innovative charity and social enterprise specialising in engagement and support.

Onward has pledged 1,200 hours of volunteering time to support a range of community projects across the North West throughout 2022, as part of our commitment to making The Onward Difference.



# CONSULTATION SPECIAL.

## HELP US MOVE ONWARD INTO THE FUTURE.

This special edition of your Onward Newsletter is your chance to shape the future of Onward. We are planning for the future and we want your help.

Every housing association has a Plan that explains what sort of landlord it wants to be and describes how it will deliver. The time has come for Onward to write a new Plan, telling customers how we will use our resources to make the biggest positive impact for the people and communities we serve.

Our Board has started this process, but it is important that our Plan reflects the priorities, needs and aspirations of our customers. This document has already benefitted from the views of those customers who regularly advise us as part of our engagement community. Now we need your help. We want to know what you think about our vision for the future and what we plan to do to make it a reality. Without your input, our Plan simply won't work.



We are calling our emerging Plan The Onward Difference and this document explains what we mean when we say this. In short, The Onward Difference is the positive difference we will make by enabling people and communities to be their best. As you will read in this newsletter, we will do this by providing homes that you love, in places you are proud of and by working with partners to invent new ways to do much more.

So it's not about us. It's about you. Your priorities, your aspirations and what we can do to listen and help.

Please read and consider the pages that follow and take a look at the back page of this newsletter to find out how you can have your say.

A handwritten signature in white ink that reads "Bronwen". The signature is stylized and fluid, with a long horizontal line extending from the end of the name.

Bronwen Rapley  
Chief Executive

# The Onward Difference

*Enabling you to be your best  
in a home you love  
and a place you are proud of*



# The Onward Difference



***The Onward Difference** is the positive difference we make by enabling people and communities to be their best. We do this by providing homes that you love, in places you are proud of and by working with partners to invent new ways to do much more.*

**We will be enablers**, supporting people and communities to fulfil their aspirations and potential. We will work with partners to invent new and local-facing ways to give people choice, control and responsibility. Sometimes this will mean enabling communities to avoid poverty, hunger or loneliness. Sometimes it will mean enabling people to take the next step, perhaps by buying their home or finding work. It will always mean giving everyone a secure, warm and healthy home.

We will use **modern technology and better data** to find new ways for our customers to have the best possible experience of living in our homes. New tech and data will make our homes greener, easier and more fun to live in, whilst minimising cost and hassle for customers. It will also mean we are easy to contact when needed and able to stay in touch with customers on the things they really care about.

We will become a **leading environmentally friendly landlord**, providing warm, safe and affordable homes. A determination to tread lightly on the environment will run through everything we do as we contribute on the big challenges, whilst making our homes and neighbourhoods greener and healthier. Our customers will enjoy the benefits of the green economy, not pay the costs of it.

We will be a **listening landlord** that leaves our customers delighted. This means listening to people and helping them own positive change in their lives and communities. We serve a diverse range of people and places, so we will come to every conversation seeking fresh voices and ready to learn. We are committed to getting right the basic things that matter so much to our customers.

We will be an employer that **people love working for** and colleagues are proud of. Our greatest asset is the knowledge, passion and commitment of our colleagues, so our investment in and respect for one another will always reflect this.

We will achieve nothing alone but everything in partnership; with customers, local government, public services and private business. We can do more, together, by sharing knowledge, coordinating resources and focusing relentlessly on what will give our customers the best outcome.

Above all, we want every customer to love their home and feel proud of where they live.

# ENABLING

Helping people take control of their lives and neighbourhoods

We will be enablers, actively supporting people and communities to fulfil their aspirations and potential, by working with partners to invent new and local-facing ways to give people choice, control and responsibility.

We will achieve this by:

Creating and supporting apprenticeships and other routes into training and work

Building 5,000 homes

Supporting the regional economy by using local suppliers

Helping people into home ownership for the first time

Leading transformation of places most in need of regeneration

Enabling neighbourhood renewal under community leadership

## WHAT WE WANT PEOPLE TO SAY ABOUT ONWARD...

“ Onward is great at helping you learn new skills and find work. I know people they helped get a job or help out in the community. If you want to do new things and get ahead, you can turn to Onward. ”

“ Onward cares about this area and you always see them around helping us make it better. If you want to use your skills to do some good in your community, Onward will always help or point you in the right direction. ”



# TECHNOLOGY

Homes with modern technology and a landlord that is easy to contact

## WHAT WE WANT PEOPLE TO SAY ABOUT ONWARD...

“ Living here is fun and just comes so easily, with great internet connection and different gadgets. My home makes it easy to save energy, money and be green. Everything just works. ”

“ I can sort most things out quickly and easily online and through my phone. But when I need more time and someone to talk to, I trust Onward to help. Dealing with them is always a delight. ”

We will use modern technology and better data to find new ways for our customers to have the best possible experience of living in our homes. New tech and data will make our homes greener, easier and more fun to live in, whilst minimising cost and hassle for customers.



We will achieve this by:

Applying modern technologies to build the best quality homes of any social landlord

Spotting great new technologies and getting them into customers' homes

Providing well ventilated homes that stay warm and are free from damp

Using data & technology to listen to customers and focus on what they care about

Helping customers use and enjoy new technology

# ENVIRONMENT

Reducing carbon by making our homes warm, dry and affordable



## WHAT WE WANT PEOPLE TO SAY ABOUT ONWARD...

“ Onward really works with you to protect the environment and keeps you up to date on their plans. They do everything they can to keep my bills low and help my family stay warm and healthy. ”

“ Onward is doing lots of work locally to make our homes green and people are feeling the benefit. My neighbourhood is safe and clean and the local area is getting greener all the time. ”

**We will become a leading environmentally friendly landlord, providing warm, safe and affordable homes. Our customers will enjoy the benefits of the green economy, not pay the costs of it.**

We will achieve this by:

All of our homes having an Energy Performance Certificate rating of C or above

All of our new homes having an Energy Performance Certificate of B or above

Building our first zero carbon homes

Creating the Onward Forest of 40,000 trees across the North West

Setting targets to reduce our CO2 footprint on our way to net zero

# LISTENING

Proper listening, real results and a human presence locally

We will be a listening landlord that leaves our customers delighted. This means listening to people and helping them own positive change in their lives and communities, as well as getting right the basic things that matter so much.

We will achieve this by:

Listening to customers with respect and empathy

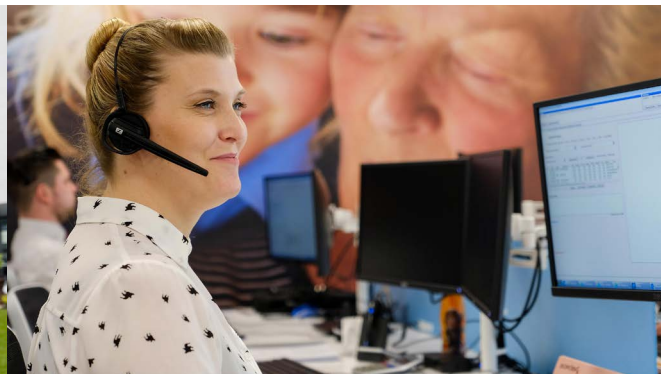
Demonstrating consistently high customer satisfaction in all services

Demonstrating to customers how their feedback has resulted in better services

Getting the basics right, first time round

Contacting you in the ways you prefer, about the things that interest you

A local presence with a friendly face in every community



## WHAT WE WANT PEOPLE TO SAY ABOUT ONWARD...

“ Onward gives me useful updates about my neighbourhood. They have a finger on the pulse and know what locals care about. It's easy to tell them what is going on, I do it through my phone and you always see them following up. ”

“ My home is warm and dry and keeps my family healthy. If anything goes wrong Onward is easy to contact and will sort it out. You know they care because they never miss an opportunity to help. ”



# COLLEAGUES

Always learning how to do a better job for our customers

We will be an employer that people love working for and colleagues are proud of.

We will achieve this by:

Colleagues being inspired by their role in making The Onward Difference

Demonstrating that colleague learning is creating better outcomes for customers

Continuing to build an inclusive and diverse workplace where everyone can give their best

## WHAT WE WANT PEOPLE TO SAY ABOUT ONWARD...

“ Onward is a brilliant place to learn new skills and build your career. It doesn't matter who you are, or where you are coming from, you feel valued and part of a real team effort. Onward gets the best from everyone. ”

“ Onward gives you everything you need to do an excellent job and enjoy your role. You have really good equipment and the IT just works. We have some really effective technologies and systems that help us serve customers. ”



# TELL US WHAT YOU THINK...

We want to know what you think about our Plan to make The Onward Difference so we have put together a consultation survey for you to give us your views directly. This is your chance to have your say on our emerging Corporate Plan. Let us know whether you agree or disagree with our aims and what you'd like to see from Onward in the future.

The consultation on our Plan runs from **16th to 30th May**

Follow [this link](#) to find our consultation survey and give us your views directly, or you can:



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



Write to us at **FAO Communications Team,**  
**Onward, Renaissance Court,**  
**2 Christie Way, Manchester M21 7QY**

## Where we've come from and what happens next.

Our current Corporate Plan (2018 – 2023) is rooted in a vision of *Making a positive difference in the communities we serve*. We set objectives to become the social landlord of choice, improve our neighbourhoods and grow where we can make a positive difference. A lot has changed in the world and for our communities since 2018 and during that time we have invested in people, homes and places. But we want to do much more, and to do better, for our customers. Our new Plan will again focus on the positive difference we can make, with an emphasis on doing everything we can to enable our customers and communities.