

Onward

# HOME OWNERSHIP MATTERS

Winter 2024

**IN THIS ISSUE:** changes we've made following your feedback and information about your year-end accounts.

In this edition I am excited to let you know about some changes we've made to the Home Ownership Team and improvements to the services we provide.

We have now issued the year-end accounts for 2023/24 and in this edition, we provide some helpful information about what these costs mean.

Following a collaborative exercise with our Homeowners Forum, we are excited to share our new Improvement Plans with you soon. These plans will provide you with advance notice of planned works that we intend to carry out at your building over the next five years and associated costs.

The launch of our new portal for Leaseholders is also coming soon and will give you another way to contact us, as well as the ability to check your account balance, view and raise communal repairs.

We are continuing to update records to ensure that the contact details and date of birth we have on file for you are accurate and relevant. So you can access the portal when it goes live, if your details have changed, please be sure to let us know by [filling in the form](#) on our website. Whether you want to report a repair, or speak to us about any of our services, we're just a phone call away so please get in touch.



**Natalie Glasier,**  
Head of Home Ownership

## GET INVOLVED.



We want to make sure that your voice is at the heart of everything we do, and our Homeowners Forum helps us make your homes and neighbourhoods better places to live.

You can join them and have the opportunity to review our performance, customer communications, documents, policies and procedures, providing constructive feedback to ensure they address the needs of our customers.

Please email [customerengagement@onward.co.uk](mailto:customerengagement@onward.co.uk) or call 0300 555 0600 if you'd like to get involved.

# CHANGES TO THE HOME OWNERSHIP TEAM.

Getting the basics right and listening to you, your priorities and aspirations remain the foundation for everything we do. Over the last year, we have been working with our customers to understand how we can make our services better.

Customers told us they didn't know who their Home Ownership Specialist was, didn't see them regularly and weren't sure what their role was. This feedback has resulted in some changes to the Home Ownership Team which we have provided an update on below.



Home Ownership Specialists (HOS) now manage less schemes. This means more time can be given to deliver high quality services, manage accounts and tackle any issues that arise in your scheme. Your HOS may change over the next few months, and we will be in touch to let you know when this is happening.

If your building has internal communal areas, your HOS will visit once a month to carry out an inspection. If your building doesn't have internal communal areas, your HOS will visit and inspect external areas every two months. This will allow them to keep an eye on things like:

- Repairs and maintenance
- Health and safety
- Quality of environmental services (cleaning, window cleaning and gardens)
- Waste management and fly tipping



Home Ownership Managers, who alongside the Head of Home Ownership, have expertise across a range of leasehold tenures and will ensure the delivery of high-quality services across our HOS. We also have two new roles:

- Technical Home Ownership Specialists who have expertise in Section 20 Consultations, lease extensions and re-sales.
- Home Ownership Coordinators who will support the delivery of lease extensions and re-sales.

If you live in a larger building, you can set up a Residents Committee or join an existing one to speak to us about any shared issues or queries. We let the Committee know when inspections are due to take place and keep them updated on actions taken. To find out more about joining or setting up a Committee, please visit [onward.co.uk/get-involved](https://onward.co.uk/get-involved).

As we look to the future, we will continue to work with our customers to make improvements to our services, develop more policies, procedures and customer guides. If you'd like to get involved, please email [customerengagement@onward.co.uk](mailto:customerengagement@onward.co.uk).



**Paul Mundy,**  
Home Ownership Specialist



**Zeeshan Taj,**  
Home Ownership Specialist

# YOUR YEAR-END ACCOUNTS.

We recently sent out your year-end accounts for 2023/24. You may have noticed some changes to make them clearer from previous years, and we hope this has helped make the year-end position easier to understand.

The rise in service charges has been driven by increased repair, maintenance and insurance costs. In addition to this, depending on the complexity and age of your building, the cost of changes needed to meet the guidelines set by the Building Safety Act 2022 may have also contributed to a rise in your service charges.

To ensure value for money for Leaseholders in a time when energy costs are rising, in October, we entered a 12-month contract with Ecotricity who will provide energy to communal areas across all our schemes. Some Leaseholders will have already

seen a reduction in communal energy costs in their year-end accounts for 2023/24.

We are working closely with Ecotricity to keep energy prices under review, with smart meters being installed across each of our schemes over the coming months, which will enable us to have accurate and up-to-date readings.

We know that this rise in service charges may be a concern and appreciate that you might have questions about what this means. If you think you'll struggle to pay for your service charges, or wish to speak to us, please get in touch by emailing [homeownership-customeraccounts@onward.co.uk](mailto:homeownership-customeraccounts@onward.co.uk) or calling **0300 555 0600**.

You can also access support from [Citizens Advice](#) and [Step Change](#).

## FIRE SAFETY INFORMATION.

Every year, we send out a copy of fire safety information to all Leaseholders who live in apartments or high-rise buildings.

This information will be sent out by post soon to the address of your property and must be read and retained by the occupant. If you have told us that you sublet your property, we will issue a copy of the documents by email. In these cases, as a landlord, it is your responsibility to ensure that tenants receive a copy of this information.

If you require additional support to evacuate in the event of a fire alarm, it is important that we have up-to-date information about your specific needs.

Alongside this newsletter, we have included a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) form. We ask that you urgently complete and return this form by email to [homeownership@onward.co.uk](mailto:homeownership@onward.co.uk) or by post to **Renaissance Court, 2 Christie Way, Manchester M21 7QY**. If you have a change of circumstances in the future, it's important that you provide an updated form to us.

If you sublet the property, you will need to contact your tenant to request that they complete and return the PEEP form to us as soon as possible. You will also need to ensure that any new tenants who move into the home complete this form where appropriate. If you have any questions or concerns, please let us know.

## KEEP COMMUNAL AREAS FREE FROM HAZARDS.

Excess bags of rubbish, furniture and other discarded household items pose a genuine fire risk to everyone in your building and must not be placed in bin stores or communal areas. This includes prams and manual or electric bikes and scooters.

If you notice hazards in bin stores or communal areas, please report it to us as soon as possible by calling **0300 555 0600**, sending us a message on WhatsApp to **07793 795882**, or emailing [customerservices@onward.co.uk](mailto:customerservices@onward.co.uk).

If we can identify the person responsible, recharges and enforcement action will be taken. If we are unable to identify the person responsible, the removal of items will be recharged to all customers living within the building through service charges.

To learn more about our approach to fly tipping, please visit our [website](#).

# OUR REPAIRS SERVICE.

From time to time, you may need to report a communal repair in your scheme. It's our top priority to get these fixed as quickly as possible.

**You can report a repair to us by:**

✉ emailing [customerservices@onward.co.uk](mailto:customerservices@onward.co.uk)

☎ calling **0300 555 0600** or messaging **07793 795 882** on WhatsApp between 8am-6pm Monday to Friday and 10am-6pm on Wednesdays

If you need to report an emergency, please call us as soon as you can on **0300 555 0600**. You can do this 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.



## ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES.

Our grass cutting service has now finished and will spring back into action from March next year. During November to February, Onward Environmental will be delivering Winter works which include the trimming back of hedges and shrubs. Cleaning and window cleaning will take place as per your current schedule.

Through our Environmental Tracker, you can now search by your postcode to get the latest updates from Onward Environmental, including things like when we've visited, when we'll next be in the area and photos after services are carried out.

Simply visit our [website](#) today to get started.

## KEEP YOUR COSTS DOWN.

We have unfortunately seen an increase in fly tipping and bin contamination at some of our buildings.

The council will not empty overfilled bins, bins with incorrect waste, or items left on the floor around the bin store. If this happens, we need to employ a contractor and the cost of this will be passed onto you via service charges.

Please follow the guidance below to help keep your building tidy and avoid additional costs.

### DO:

- ✓ Use the correct bin to dispose of or recycle your rubbish
- ✓ Fold large cardboard boxes flat so that they don't take up as much room
- ✓ If you're not sure which bins you should put your rubbish in, visit your local council's website
- ✓ Speak to your neighbours if you spot them using the wrong bin or leaving items on the floor
- ✓ Make sure your tenants are aware of the bin arrangements if you sublet your property

### DO NOT:

- ✗ Leave items on the floor by the bin as the council won't collect them
- ✗ Over-fill bins that are already full as the council won't empty them
- ✗ Put bagged rubbish on the floor in shared bin areas as the council won't collect it and it can attract vermin
- ✗ Leave large waste items in your garden or communal areas. Please take these items to the local tip or arrange a council collection

If you notice fly tipping in communal areas or gardens, please report this to us immediately by emailing [customerservices@onward.co.uk](mailto:customerservices@onward.co.uk), calling **0300 555 0600**, or messaging **07793 795882**.

If you notice fly tipping on the street or in alleyways, please report this to your local council.

If you need any help understanding this document, please give us a call on **0300 555 0600**, send us a message on WhatsApp to **07793 795882**, or send an email to **homeownership@onward.co.uk**.

Jeśli potrzebujesz pomocy w zrozumieniu tego dokumentu, zadzwoń do nas na numer 0300 555 0600, wyślij nam wiadomość na WhatsApp na numer 07793 795882 lub wyślij e-mail na adres [homeownership@onward.co.uk](mailto:homeownership@onward.co.uk).

إذا كنت بحاجة إلى أي مساعدة في فهم هذه الوثيقة، فيرجى الاتصال بنا على 0300 555 0600، أو أرسل رسالة إلينا على رقم الواتس [homeownership@onward.co.uk](mailto:homeownership@onward.co.uk) 07793 795882 أو أرسل رسالة بريد إلكتروني إلى

এই নথিটি বুঝতে আপনার যদি কোনো সাহায্যের প্রয়োজন হয়, তাহলে অনুগ্রহ করে আমাদের 0300 555 0600 নম্বরে একটি কল করুন, আমাদের হোয়াটসঅ্যাপ -এ 07793 795882 নম্বরে একটি বার্তা পাঠান বা [homeownership@onward.co.uk](mailto:homeownership@onward.co.uk).

اگر برای درک این سند به کمک نیاز دارید، لطفاً با ما با شماره 03005550600 تماس بگیرید، از طریق واتساپ به شماره [homeownership@onward.co.uk](mailto:homeownership@onward.co.uk) 07793795882 برای ما پیام بفرستید یا یک ایمیل به

如果您在理解本文件时需要任何帮助，请致电 0300 555 0600，通过 WhatsApp 发送信息至 07793 795882，或发送电子邮件至 [homeownership@onward.co.uk](mailto:homeownership@onward.co.uk)。

Haddii aad u baahan tahay in lagaa caawiyo fahamka dokumentigan, fadlan naga soo wac lambarkan 0300 555 0600, farriin noogu soo dir lambarkan WhatsApp-ta 07793 795882, ama email noogu soo dir [homeownership@onward.co.uk](mailto:homeownership@onward.co.uk).

اگر آپ کو اس دستاویز کو سمجھنے میں کسی مدد کی ضرورت ہے، تو براہ کرم ہمیں 0300 555 0600 پر کال کریں۔ ہمیں واٹس ایپ [homeownership@onward.co.uk](mailto:homeownership@onward.co.uk) پر 07793 795882 پر پیغام بھیجیں، یا

Si vous avez besoin d'aide pour comprendre ce document, appelez-nous au 0300 555 0600, envoyez-nous un message sur WhatsApp au 07793 795882, ou envoyez un e-mail à [homeownership@onward.co.uk](mailto:homeownership@onward.co.uk).

ئەگەر پتوویستت بە یارمەتی ھەبە پۆ تێگەشتن لەم بەلگەنامەیە، تکایە پەیوەندیمان پێوە بکە بە ژمارە تەلەفۆنی 03005550600، لە واتسەپ [homeownership@onward.co.uk](mailto:homeownership@onward.co.uk) پەیمانیگمان پۆ بنێرە بە ژمارە تەلەفۆنی 07793795882 یان ئیمەیلیگمان پۆ بنێرە پۆ

Se necessitar de ajuda para compreender este documento, contacte-nos para o número 0300 555 0600, envie-nos uma mensagem para o WhatsApp para o número 07793 795882, ou envie um email para [homeownership@onward.co.uk](mailto:homeownership@onward.co.uk).