

# Annual Review

## April 2008 to March 2009



[www.tamworth.gov.uk](http://www.tamworth.gov.uk)

*Tamworth*  
Borough Council

Annual Review AR1



## Foreword

Welcome to the Annual Review of Tamworth Borough Council for the financial year April 2008 to March 2009.

The review highlights the Council's key achievements and activities in 2008 and 2009; its successful delivery of services providing Tamworth tax payers with value for money.

## Contents

Foreword	1
Vision and Values	2
What we achieved	3
Performance indicators	3
Achievements related to our Corporate priorities & value for money	3
Our councillors	7
Summary accounts 2008/09	8
Challenges for the future	10
Contact us	11

## Vision and Values

**Every year, we review our vision and priorities to make sure that the services we are delivering and projects we support continue to meet the needs of Tamworth, its residents and its businesses. To help make these decisions, we use the results of our citizen consultation and engagement activities such as Tamworth Listens.**

**For 2008 – 2009 we revised our vision to be that;**

By 2020, Tamworth will be an ideal place to live, work and raise your family in the Heart of England.

To support this vision we established new corporate priorities;

1. Working with others, we will actively tackle the causes and impact of crime and anti-social behaviour.
2. Working with others, we will create and maintain a clean and green environment.
3. Working with others, we will provide a vibrant and prosperous town centre.
4. Working with others, we will continue to raise our positive profile within the Heart of England.
5. Working with others, we will improve housing standards for the people of Tamworth.
6. Working with others, we will improve health and education standards for the people of Tamworth.

Value for money remains at the heart of everything we do – and

remains a challenge in the context of the Government's efficiency agenda, as it does for all local authorities.

**Specific challenges for the future included:**

- Helping our communities deal with the effects of the economic downturn.
- Helping secure individuals' economic well-being.
- Continuing to improve access to and quality of services.
- Expanding services to reduce and prevent homelessness.
- Delivering the outcomes of the master plan for the town centre.
- Continuing to preserve and enhance the borough's attractions and heritage.
- Promoting healthy lifestyles by increasing access to sport, recreation and information.
- Making educational achievement a realistic aspiration for all.
- Building on the 10 years of achievement of the Tamworth Community Safety Partnership with further preventative measures.
- Reducing litter, parking and nuisance behaviour by encouraging responsible civic behaviour.



# What we achieved

## Performance Indicators

According to the Audit Commission's published figures, our overall performance improved over the period April 2008 to March 2009.

- 54% of all our best value and national indicators improved
- 83% in the area of tackling crime and antisocial behaviour
- 66% in the area of keeping Tamworth clean and green
- 72% related to housing

The trend of performance against the targets for our indicators – those dictated by central Government and those decided by us – has also been positive; developing from its base in 2007 and looking to improve further into 2009/10.

### Priority 1 – Working with others, we will actively tackle the causes and impact of crime and anti-social behaviour

For some, this is the Number 1 priority for the Council. Certainly, our performance indicators are strongest in this area. There is a volume of activity which contributes to this; for example:

- Operation Teamwork (two day targeted engagement events involving partners from the public, private and voluntary sectors in a number of neighbourhoods) – resulting in substantial improvements in residents' feeling of safety after dark & reductions in police recorded figures of anti social behaviour incidents and criminal damage. The Council's actions contributed to the Staffordshire Police receiving the Tilley Award for reductions in burglaries and the Council had the opportunity to collect information to inform its future

months

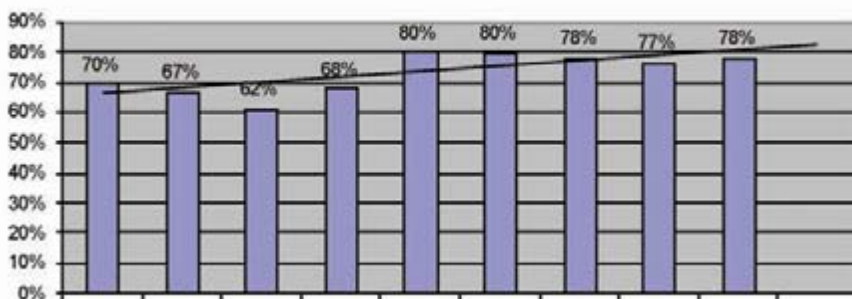
- Ongoing commitment to Street Wardens in the community
- Creation of an Alcohol Free Zone in Amington – to curb alcohol related anti social behaviour and to stop the consumption of alcohol in the street and other public areas; involving visits to licensed premises where an off-licence is present to gather information regarding under-age sales
- Online Watch Link (OWL) launched – providing a direct reporting link between residents and the police, supporting neighbourhoods' engagement in the safety of their area
- CCTV operation – resulting in the award for CCTV Operator Team of the Year

### Priority 2 – Working with others, we will create and maintain a clean and green environment.

- In 2008, the Council was Silver medallist in the Heart of England in Bloom competition.
- Tamworth designated four Nature reserves with another three in the pipeline. (It also has a project ongoing with the Environment agency to re profile the River Tame).
- The Council has fully refurbished 2 of its 23 play areas, with all others repainted and extensively maintained in partnership with the Probation Service.

Another headline priority for many; the Council is extremely active and performs well in indicators for this priority. Regrettably, the Council struggles to translate that performance into improved public perception of the area's environment and the Council's management of it.

Performance v All Indicators (Target 100%)



- licensing activity and strategy
- Project Turnaround (providing positive interventions, education, and activities to reduce the numbers entering the Criminal Justice System)
- PlaySpace summer programme – engaging children in constructive learning through play during the summer

## Achievements related to our Corporate Priorities and Value for Money



### **Priority 3 – Working with others, we will provide a vibrant and prosperous town centre.**

- The Council commissioned a Town Centre Master Plan, which forms the basis of a Town Centre Partnership incorporating all key town centre stakeholders. This partnership will ensure that there is a sound basis on which the prosperity of the Town Centre can be achieved.
- Over 100 visits were made by Enforcement Officers to licensed premises in the town centre. As a result, 1 licence was revoked.
- The Council has supported the sustainable prosperity of the town centre by
  - improvements to the Castle,
  - the programme of events at the Assembly Rooms and Castle,
  - an ongoing commitment to the Shopmobility service,
  - the opening of the Castle Grounds Activity Centre,
  - sponsorship of outdoor events such as the Bonfire Night Celebrations in the Castle Grounds (very well received, despite the rain!), the St George's Day Celebrations (featuring the Castle Grounds' first ever full battle re-enactment) and the Christmas Lights Switch On.

### **Priority 4 – Working with others, we will continue to raise our positive profile within the Heart of England**

The Council raises its profile and that of the borough by its own actions and provision of services and by partnership with others from all sectors.

There are a number of events throughout of the year where the

Council invites business to become sponsors and join forces with us to raise the profile of local events and also the businesses (e.g. Christmas Lights, Tamworth in Bloom, the Film Festival, and the Outdoor Events programme, such as the Summer Festival and St Georges' Day Celebrations weekend).

**The Business & Economic Partnership** produces a quarterly Business Brief, going out to 5500 business across Tamworth Borough and Lichfield District. The aim of this is to inform local businesses of public sector related activities, but also promote local businesses – Advertising is offered at a low cost, but relevant local business news stories are published for free.

**Think Local** is a project between all of the local authorities in Staffordshire. It acts as an online business directory for nearly 23500 businesses, and more importantly as a hub, to enable businesses to interact with each other and trade and "think" locally. This project has already culminated in an award from RegenWM for Most transferable best practice and will shortly launch a "Think Local" pledge. This pledge is being signed by all Local authorities to signify their commitment to supporting local businesses.

Other profile raising achievements in 2008/09 were:

- Freedom Parade – freedom of the borough for the Mercian Regiment
- Launch of a new website with accessible links to key information and services
- Active partnership in the 'Rate my Place' website – a scheme with 5 other Staffordshire Local Authorities to inform the public

and provide recognition for businesses who achieve good hygiene standards.

**Priority 5 – Working with others, we will improve housing standards for the people of Tamworth**

The Council has achieved much in both social and private sector housing contexts

- First point of contact is now an integral part of the service.
- A positive approach to hate crime; expanded, with partners, from racial harassment to reflect wider needs, including sexuality. Support for hate crime victims has been improved and now includes help under the Sanctuary initiative, as well as fast responses to vandalism and offensive graffiti.
- Outcomes for 16/17 year olds have improved.
- The Council supports homelessness prevention within its own stock and employs a dedicated financial support post which has generated around £600,000 in additional benefits for Council tenants and has improved post letting visit arrangements and support. (CLG have invested £30,000 for work with Lichfield, South Staffordshire, North Warwickshire and Cannock).
- Nomination arrangements with RSLs have been improved. The Council now has nomination rights of between 75 and 100 per cent on all housing association stock, compared to 25 to 50 per cent previously.
- The Council is now making better use of its own stock to meet needs of people requiring adaptations by developing a comprehensive database of

existing adapted properties within the stock and actively matching applicants to suitable accommodation when letting homes.

- Private sector properties are being leased by the Council to widen choice for temporary accommodation, using a checklist of criteria to assess the property to a certain standard.
- Customer satisfaction with the Bond Scheme (for those wishing to move to private sector rental without accessing temporary accommodation) has improved.
- Improved homelessness prevention has led to reduced usage of bed and breakfast accommodation
- The Council has reversed the falling trend in Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) completions and secured additional funding from a range of sources towards the end of 2008/09, which enabled it to approve every outstanding (eligible) application on the waiting list at that time.
- Fast tracking approval arrangements is a high priority for Disabled Facilities Grant applications, most of which are assessed within a three week target. Minor adaptations for Council tenants are now undertaken on demand, without the need for assessment, while it continues to part fund a dedicated occupational therapist to speed up assessment of more major needs.
- A landlord accreditation scheme has been established together with a landlord forum.
- A partnership with Royal Sun Alliance has been established

to maximise House Insurance take up by tenants

- £260,000 for improvements to Thomas Hardy Court have been approved

**Priority 6 – Working with others, we will improve health and education standards for the people of Tamworth**

In 2008/09, the Council developed a number of strategies with partners in order to address the ongoing health and education needs for the communities. These include draft Outdoor Sports and Community Leisure strategies.

In addition, health and education standards have been promoted by

- No Smoking Day campaign (with the PCT) which led to numerous people accessing smoking cessation services
- Workshops in community centres and schools to promote hand washing in order to prevent the transmission of germs and thus to reduce time off work and training through illness
- Health & Safety awareness campaigns in local businesses, targeting slips, trips falls and back complaints
- Completing 100% of high risk premises inspections - regrettably 3 premises were closed or closed voluntarily for breaches of hygiene, but with our support these premises are now reopened and subject to regular checks.
- Outdoor events programme
- Occupational Therapy for tenants with disabilities (in partnership with County Council)
- PlaySpace summer programme
- Opening the Castle Grounds Activity Centre

# Annual Review



- Ongoing commitment to Children's Trust and community advocate for £100M Building Schools for the Future opportunity
- The Council's Health & Wellbeing promotion day
- Supporting the Nurturing Health Award in Tamworth – which aims to help nurseries provide a varied, safe and balanced diet for the children in their care and to provide healthy lifestyle messages to the children and their families
- Providing outreach 'clinic in a box' alcohol and drugs screening and intervention services to provide information and advice on sexual health drugs and alcohol services
- Providing web based information free of charge on health and other local services through Elephant Kiosks (PIC) installed across Tamworth

## Values

**It is paramount that the Council delivers services that are well-governed, ethical, effective, efficient and economically viable.**

### To these ends 2008/09 saw:

- The launch of a modern Integrated Contact Management Centre, with redesigned reception at Marmion House, shared by both Tamworth Borough Council and Staffordshire Social Services, delivering improvements in first time resolution for a range of customer service enquiries
- The consolidation of Area Housing Offices & closure of Marmion House cash office in favour of increased online,

telephone and kiosk based access, with more officers operating in the neighbourhoods

- The start of a debt counselling and referral process, including TamCAN (Tamworth Community Action Network) to support individuals and businesses through the Economic Downturn
- Tamworth CommUnity – an event celebrating the borough's diversity
- The transfer of the Waste Management call centre to the Council in order to increase value for money
- Economic Development and Building Control services shared with Lichfield District Council
- The procurement of Cannock Chase District Council's Legal Team to prosecute Housing Benefit & Council Tax fraud cases
- 99% Customer Satisfaction with the Benefits Service
- Major developments in Civil Contingencies preparations
- Improved customer payment options (e.g. kiosk and online access)
- Retained accreditation in ISO Information (service, security & data quality) Standards



# Our Councillors



Tamworth Borough Council consists of 30 Councillors in 10 wards. Following the local authority election in May 2008, the Council was made up of 24 Conservative, 5 Labour and 1 Independent councillors. There were no bi-elections during the course of the year.

## Amington Ward



Cllr John Garner  
Conservative  
01827 310280  
john-garner@tamworth.gov.uk



Cllr Evelyn Rowe  
Conservative  
01827 68808  
evelyn-rowe@tamworth.gov.uk



Cllr John Wells  
Conservative  
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john-wells@tamworth.gov.uk

## Castle Ward



Cllr Steven Claymore  
Conservative  
01827 280748  
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Cllr Alan Lees  
Conservative  
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alan-lees@tamworth.gov.uk



Cllr Marion Couchman  
Labour  
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## Belgrave Ward



Cllr Steve Nicklin  
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Cllr Robert Pritchard  
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07921 681048  
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Cllr Martin Summers  
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## Glascote Ward



Cllr Chris Cooke  
Independent  
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Dr Simon Peple  
Labour  
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Cllr Nicola Annandale  
Conservative  
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## Bolehall Ward



Cllr John Faulkner  
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Cllr Ken Norchi  
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Cllr Peter Seekings  
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## Mercian Ward



Cllr Bruce Boughton  
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Cllr Sam Munn  
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## Spital Ward



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Cllr Maureen Gant  
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## Stonydelph Ward



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Cllr Steven Pritchard  
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## Trinity Ward



Cllr Jeremy Oates  
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Cllr Mick Oates  
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Cllr Gerald Pinner  
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## Wilnecote Ward



Cllr Lee Bates  
Conservative  
01827 285296  
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Cllr Brian Beale  
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Cllr Mary Oates  
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## Unaudited Summary Accounts 2008/09\*

### The Cost of Council Services' Revenue Account for 2008/09

The Revenue account below shows the cost of running Council Services between April 2008 and March 2009, where the money came from to finance those costs along with the surplus at the year end.

Tamworth Borough Council budgeted to make a surplus of £0.56m in 2008/09. The year-end position was a surplus of £0.83m. The improvement in the Council's estimated financial position arose mainly from extra income from recycling, savings in information systems maintenance costs and a lower cost of benefits paid out. The Council's general fund balances at 31 March 2009 was increased by the in year surplus to £5.11m.

### Income and Expenditure Account

	£m
Central Services	0.8
Cultural, Environmental & Planning	10.1
Highways, Roads & Transport	0.1
Local Authority Housing	16.0
Other Housing Services	1.1
Corporate & Democratic Core	1.7
Other Costs	0.6
<b>Net Cost of Services</b>	<b>30.4</b>
Trading Undertakings	(0.7)
Interest Paid	4.2
Interest Received	(1.4)
Appropriations & Internal Accounting	(23.4)
<b>Amount to be met from Government Grants &amp; Local Tax Payers</b>	<b>9.1</b>
Council Tax	(3.2)
General Government Grants	(0.9)
Non-Domestic Rates	(5.8)
<b>Net General Fund Surplus</b>	<b>(0.8)</b>
Balance on 1st April	4.3
Balance on 31st March	5.1

The overall revenue financial position relating to council housing shows a surplus for the year of £1.07m. This equates to an underspend of £0.58m when compared to the approved budget for the year, mainly due to higher than anticipated rent income, a reduction in management costs, unspent contingencies and lower housing repair contract expenditure. This has resulted in an increase in housing revenue account balances from £2.76m to £3.83m to be carried forward to 2009/10.

### Capital Expenditure

During 2008/09 the Council spent £5.36m on capital works. The majority of expenditure related to improvement, enhancement or ongoing construction works. Fixed assets acquisitions include the purchase of IT equipment (software & hardware), costs associated with improvement works to St. Editha's Square, refurbishment of Marmion House Reception and Integrated Contact Management Centre and improvements to Tamworth Castle. There were no significant disposals during the year. A breakdown by service and source of finance is shown within this leaflet.

\* The Council's Statement of Accounts has been prepared in accordance with the Accounting Code of Practice. For the purposes of this summary some simplifications have been made to provide more meaningful information.

Following conclusion of the audit by the Audit Commission, a full copy of the Council's 2008/09 audited accounts will be available on the Council's website [www.tamworth.gov.uk](http://www.tamworth.gov.uk) and available for inspection at Marmion House. Please contact the Assistant Director Corporate Finance on 01827 709242 for further details.

### Housing Revenue Account

	£m
Income from Rents & Charges	(15.7)
Expenditure	31.6
Net Interest paid	1.4
Appropriation & internal accounting	(18.4)
Net surplus	(1.1)
Balance on 1 April	2.7
Balance on 31 March	3.8

### Capital Expenditure

	£m
Council Dwellings	3.6
Other Land & Buildings	0.7
Vehicles, Plant & Equipment	0.3
Community Assets	0.1
Housing & Other Grants	0.4
Investment Properties	0.2
Software	0.1
	<b>5.4</b>
Financed by:	
Capital Receipts	1.1
Government Grants & Other Contributions	0.5
Revenue/ Reserves	3.3
Supported Borrowing	0.5
Unsupported Borrowing	0.0
	<b>5.4</b>

### Balance Sheet – what the Council owns, owes or is owed

31 March 2008 £m		31 March 2009 £m
245	Buildings, Land & Assets Owned by the Council	218
4	Money Owed to the Council	4
(7)	Money Owed by the Council	(7)
19	Investments	18
(9)	Pension Liability	(19)
(23)	Long Term Debt	(23)
<b>229</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>191</b>
	Financed by:	
8	Reserves	7
7	Revenue Balances	9
3	Capital Income not yet used	4
220	Capital Finance & Revaluation of Assets	190
(9)	Pension Reserve	(19)
<b>229</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>191</b>



## Challenges for the future

**Within the Council's 2020 vision, and after due consultation, we have slightly amended the corporate priorities and their related objectives for 2009/10;**

**1. Working with others, we will actively tackle the cause and impact of crime and anti-social behaviour.**

**Objectives:**

- Making sure people feel safe;
- Reducing levels of crime and anti-social behaviour;
- Encouraging the involvement of local communities in addressing crime and anti-social behaviour.

**2. Working with others, we will create and maintain a clean and green environment.**

**Objectives:**

- Making sure that Tamworth has clean streets and high quality open spaces;
- To promote a sustainable lifestyle across local communities.

**3. Working with others, we will provide a vibrant and prosperous town centre.**

**Objectives:**

- To continue to develop an integrated Master Plan for Tamworth Town Centre;
- To undertake a review of leisure and entertainment demand.

**4. Working with others, we will improve housing standards for the people of Tamworth.**

**Objectives:**

- Making sure that Good Quality Housing will be available;
- Improving housing and environmental conditions for everyone;
- Addressing the housing needs of vulnerable people and improving services in preventing homelessness.

**5. Working with others, we will continue to raise our positive profile within the Heart of England.**

**Objectives:**

- To increase public pride in the Borough of Tamworth and encourage positive feedback relating to Public Services in the Borough;
- To involve local businesses and partners in raising the profile of Tamworth.

**6. Working with others, we will improve health and education standards for the people of Tamworth.**

**Objectives:**

- To help people live a longer, healthier, active life;
- To reduce the number of people not in employment, education or training;
- To provide best leisure options to meet local needs.

## Once more, value for money remains at the heart of everything we do.

### Specific challenges for the future include:

- Continuing to help our communities deal with the effects of the economic downturn.
- Helping secure individuals' and businesses' economic well-being.
- Continuing to improve access to and quality of services.
- Continuing to Make Equalities Real in Tamworth (MERIT)
- Expanding services to reduce and prevent homelessness.
- Delivering the outcomes of the master plan for the town centre.
- Continuing to preserve and enhance the borough's attractions and heritage.
- Continuing to promoting healthy lifestyles by increasing access to sport, recreation and information.
- Making educational achievement a realistic aspiration for all and engaging with the Building Schools for the Future (BSF) opportunity
- Better understanding our customers' needs
- Responding to our communities' poor perception of the Council and its partners as local public service providers.
- Improving the Council's capacity to deliver its services through investment and partnership.

## Contact us

To provide feedback specifically on the form and content of this Annual Review, please email [richard-halsall@tamworth.gov.uk](mailto:richard-halsall@tamworth.gov.uk).

For more information about Tamworth Borough Council visit our website at [www.tamworth.gov.uk](http://www.tamworth.gov.uk) or pick up a copy of our residents' magazine, Talkback.

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