

# Directory of Strategic Housing Services

Within this directory you should find  
all the information you need to know  
about the Strategic Housing Service in  
Tamworth



## Introduction

For clarification purposes, the Strategic Housing function can be defined below:

- To access and plan for the current and future housing needs of the local population
- To make best use of the existing housing by improving current housing stock and preventing homelessness
- To plan and facilitate new supply
- To plan and commission housing support services which link homes and housing support services
- To work in partnership to secure effective housing and neighbourhood management on an on-going basis

Tamworth Borough Council's strategic housing service consists of 2 teams carrying out the above roles, the Housing Strategy Team and the Housing Advice Team. The strategic housing function varies between local authorities and will appear differently in other areas.

For the purposes of this directory we have split it into 6 separate areas as identified in the contents page in an attempt to incorporate what the service looks like to assist customers and partner agencies.

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## Housing Strategy and Enabling Function

The Housing Strategy Team works with a range of partners to tackle housing issues within Tamworth and the wider sub-region. It is responsible for contributing to, developing and implementing a range of housing related strategies in partnership with other agencies and residents of Tamworth.

Key roles of the Housing Strategy Team include:

- Preparation of the Council's Housing and Health Strategy and implementation of the action plan
- Preparation of the Council's Homelessness Strategy and monitoring the action plan
- Monitoring the performance of Registered Housing Providers (Housing Associations) operating in Tamworth
- Working with partners to develop a range of affordable housing and housing services to meet identified local need
- Collecting and maintaining information about the current and future housing needs of the residents of Tamworth in order to produce housing bulletins for members of the public and key partners
- Working with colleagues in planning to ensure that policies meet identified housing need

Research and data that the Housing Strategy Team gather helps the Council and its partners to strategically plan services in the borough to try and meet housing need. Key documents which form the evidence base for our strategic housing plans can be found on the [Tamworth Borough Council website](#).

link to web page

These documents include:

- Housing and Health Strategy
- Homelessness Strategy
- Strategic Housing Market Assessment
- Housing Needs Survey
- Affordable Housing Viability & Policy Study
- Gypsy & Travellers Accommodation Assessment
- Private Sector Stock Condition Survey

The Housing Strategy Team also lead on the Housing Thematic Partnership (HTP) which is a multiagency partnership consisting of internal and external partners from various statutory and non statutory sectors which forms part of the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP). The partnership oversees strategic housing activity in the borough and has 3 delivery forums aligned to it. The aligned forums include:

- Supply and Independent Living Forum -This group oversees new housing and enhancing existing supply and aims to assist vulnerable client groups to live independently.
- Housing Options Delivery Forum - This group oversees improving the housing options for residents of Tamworth both in terms of accessing social housing and within the private sector.
- Landlord Operations and Financial Wellbeing Forum- This group oversees landlord service functions and involves registered housing providers who operate in the borough in discussions. The group also aim to improve financial inclusion in the borough.

**For more information please contact the Housing Strategy Team on 01827 709700**



## Private Sector Housing Functions

### Bringing Empty Homes Back into Use

The Council works proactively with empty property owners to advise, guide and assist them to bring empty properties back into use and subject to availability funding grants may be available to assist with this.

**For more information please contact the Landlord Liaison and Empty Homes Officer on 01827 709345 or visit the website**



### Empty Homes Assistance Grant

Subject to financial resources the Council can offer grants of up to £10,000 to assist empty home owners to bring properties back into use. To be eligible for one of these grants:

- The property must have been empty for 12 months or more
- The owner must not be able to access any other forms of funding
- The owner must show that they have no savings

link to web page

Depending on the amount of the grant the property must be let at an affordable rent for up to 5 years after the grant is received.

If you have an empty property and would like more information about an Empty Homes Assistance Grant to bring the property back into use then please contact the Landlord Liaison and Empty Homes Officer on 01827 709345

Link to the Empty Homes page on the website

link to web page



### Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG)

A DFG is a local council grant to help towards the cost of adapting a home to enable a person with disabilities to continue to live there. A grant is paid when the council considers that changes are necessary to meet the needs of the individual and that the work is reasonable and practical.

DFG's are used for someone living in a property, who is disabled either the owner occupier or tenant of a private rented property (including licensees) The person, or the person on who is applying on behalf of a disabled person must intend to occupy the property as their only main residence throughout the current 5 year grant period. A landlord may also apply in behalf of a disabled tenant. The grant is means tested, but this is not the case for grants

applied for on behalf of children who are under the age of 18 years.

Currently the maximum grant is £30,000

Grants are delivered in partnership with Occupational Therapists who provide a medical assessment and Spiritra Home Improvement Agency who plan drawings, tender for work and provide on-site supervision of building works.

**For more information please contact the Housing Grants Officer on 01827 709470**

## **Enforcement of Housing Standards**

A Private Sector Housing Officer aims to work with home owners, tenants and landlords to ensure that homes achieve the necessary standards of repair. Where the team identifies a house that is in serious disrepair and a risk to the health and safety of the occupants, it may have a legal duty to take action. The Council will initially attempt to resolve matters informally and in certain cases this may be achieved by offering the owner grant assistance or by identifying repairs and agreeing a timescale, within which, the necessary works should be completed. If a complaint is made about a property, a member of the team will carry out an inspection of the property to decide what action needs to be taken.

**For more information on enforcement issues please contact the Housing Advice Team on 01827 709486**



## Home Energy Efficiency

Being energy efficient is about making the best use of the energy we need for heating, lighting and running appliances in the home. For a home that is behaving badly by wasting energy, there are a number of solutions to reduce that waste and make the home run more efficiently and cheaper to run.

We provide home energy advice via our Home Energy Advice Tamworth (HEAT) freephone Line and also refer clients to the government 'Warm Front' scheme which gives grants to vulnerable people for insulation and/or heating and the Health Through Warmth scheme which provides heating measures to those who have a cold or damp related illness.

**For more information please contact the Heat freephone line on 0800 043 2815 or visit the website**

*link to web page*



## Landlord Forum

Tamworth Borough Council has a Private Sector Landlord Forum which meets quarterly, is chaired by landlords and is the ideal opportunity for private landlords and anyone interested in letting a property in the district...

- to share experiences
- to meet with Council officers
- to learn about the role Tamworth Borough Council can play in support of the private rented sector.

The forum includes talks and guest speakers on a variety of relevant subjects with opportunities to ask questions and discuss issues affecting the district's private landlords.

The Forum also seeks to promote good practice by spreading awareness of landlord's legal obligations, to increase awareness of changes in legislation and to allow the Council to consult with landlords on new policies.

**For more information about the landlords forum please contact the Landlord Liaison and Empty Homes Officer on 01827 709345 or visit the website**

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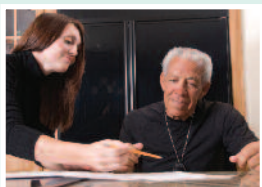
## Landlord Accreditation Scheme

Tamworth Borough Council administers the Tamworth Landlord Accreditation Service providing advice and training for landlords wishing to become accredited. The Landlord Accreditation Scheme is a borough-wide accreditation scheme that encourages and rewards good property standards and management practice in the private rented sector. Any residential landlord with properties in the borough can join the scheme.

We encourage tenants looking to rent a home to check to see if their landlord is accredited.

**For more information on Tamworth Borough Council's Accreditation Scheme please contact the Landlord Liaison and Empty Homes Officer on 01827 709345 or visit the website**

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## Homelessness Prevention and Housing Advice Function

### General housing advice and housing applications

The housing advice team offer general housing advice to residents wishing to access Council and Housing Association properties in Tamworth. Tamworth Borough Council now operates a choice based lettings scheme which allows people to apply (or bid) for vacant properties. Choice based lettings means local authorities advertise their housing vacancies to all applicants. Applicants are given the opportunity to apply (or bid) for advertised properties which are suitable for their needs. The applicant with the highest priority under the scheme becomes the successful applicant. Priority is given to those with more urgent housing needs, and then in order of waiting time. For example, where applicants with the same priority have bid for the same property, the applicant who has been waiting the longest should be allocated the property.

Visit **Finding a Home** on the web  
or the **Homelessness Prevention** page



links to web pages

For more information please contact the Housing Advice Team 01827 709459

## Housing Advice Drop In Surgeries

Housing advice drop in surgeries are held every Wednesday between 9.30am to 12 noon at Marmion House for those needing housing advice and assistance - no appointment necessary.

**For more information please contact the Housing Advice Team on 01827 709459**

## Homelessness Prevention

The Housing Advice Team will assist clients who find themselves homeless or threatened with homelessness. They will however, in the first instance, always try to prevent someone from becoming homeless and this could include mediating with landlords or parents, assisting with benefit claims, negotiating with lenders etc.

**For more information please contact the Housing Advice Team on 01827 709462**

Homeless prevention tools available to service users, dependant on circumstances, include:

### **Tamworth Bond Scheme**

The Bond Scheme is available to help enable people who are in need of housing access private rented accommodation. The scheme offers a written guarantee to private landlords, up to the value of 8 weeks rent in circumstances where they are unable to pay a deposit by themselves. The scheme has conditional criteria and access will be at the discretion of the housing advice team.

**For more information please contact the Housing Advice Team on 01827 709459**

### **Debt Advice**

Assistance in accessing debt advice is available to anyone who lives or works in the borough through a referral to an appropriate money advisor.

**For more information and or a referral to the above support agencies please contact the Housing Advice Team on 01827 709458**

## Tamworth Credit Union

Tamworth Credit Union offer a local savings scheme for people who live or work in Tamworth and can provide small loans and in some instance larger ones, for example to pay for rent in advance. Tamworth Credit Union can also provide basic budgeting advice.

**For more information please contact the Tamworth Credit Union on 01827 65062 or Email: [town@tcul.org.uk](mailto:town@tcul.org.uk)**

## Floating Support

A floating support service provided by Bromford is available to help people within the borough with difficulties with maintaining a tenancy. They deal with issues such as budgeting and applying for benefits. The Housing Advice Team can explain the criteria for this service and make a referral where appropriate to try and prevent homelessness.

**For more information please contact the Housing Advice Team on 01827 709459**

## Food Packs

The Housing Advice Team in conjunction with the Starfish Project are sometimes able to provide food packs to people who are homeless.

**For more information please contact the Housing Advice Team on 01827 709459**

## **Mortgage Rescue Scheme (MRS)**

If a homeowner is threatened with repossession it may be possible to sell part or all of their property on to a registered housing provider and rent it back as a tenant. To be considered for this, the applicant must be in Priority Need and owe no more than 120% of the value of the property. The Housing Advice Team can make a referral to the scheme if the applicant meets the relevant criteria.

**For more information please contact the Housing Advice Team on 01827 709458**

## **Repossession Prevention Fund (RPF)**

The RPF was created following funding provided by the government to help people who may be facing repossession or eviction. Tamworth Borough Council's Housing Advice Team administers this fund which is able in certain circumstances to offer loans or grants between £1,000 and £5,000 to prevent homelessness as a last resort prevention tool. The RPF has a strict conditional criteria and access will be granted at the discretion of the housing advice team. Referrals can be made following debt advice with Citizens Advice Bureau.

**For more information please contact the Housing Advice Team on 01827 709462**

## Spend to Save Prevention Fund

The Housing Advice Team has access to a small budget up to a maximum of £200 to be used to help prevent a person's homelessness. This fund is administered and granted at the discretion of the Housing Advice Team and is subject to a strict criteria.

**For more information please contact the Housing Advice Team on 01827 709459**

## Fleeing Domestic Violence

Pathways will support women suffering domestic abuse. Direct support is offered to families through one to one support including emotional and practical advice.

**For more information please contact Pathways on 01543 676800**

## Supported Accommodation Projects

The Housing Advice Team can make referrals to supporting housing projects to the following schemes where the applicant meets the main criteria (**\* conditions apply**):

- Tamworth Cornerstone (ages 16-24)

- Byatt House (ages 18-24)
- Chestnut/Edenfield/Ellerbeck/Eldwick (young parents)
- Wallerook - Mental Ill Health (age 18+)

**For more information please contact the Housing Advice Team on 01827 709459**



### **Tamworth Homelessness Education Prevention Programme**

Tamworth Borough Council has a Homelessness Education Officer to visit schools and other community groups or agencies in the borough in an attempt to raise awareness of homelessness in order to help prevent homelessness in the future. The Homelessness Education Officer works in partnership with the turnaround team, a multiagency team which works collaboratively to support young people and their families.

**For more information please contact the Homelessness Education Officer on 01827 709217 or visit the website**





Tamworth Borough Council is committed to improving and measuring the quality of our performance to ensure the best results are achieved for the residents of Tamworth. As part of this commitment we have set 10 service standards which will be regularly assessed to measure against our performance.

The service standards below will be sent out with all correspondence by the strategic housing services and reported on in our monthly performance pack.

## Strategic Housing Service Standards

- 1 If you live in rented accommodation and you are threatened with an eviction without the correct notices to quit the premises, we will start to investigate these and other harassment matters within 48 hours of receipt of the complaint.
- 2 We will start to investigate urgent complaints of poor housing conditions within 48 hours and less urgent complaints within 5 working days.
- 3 We will work with partners to build a minimum of 145 additional new homes each year during the period 2006-26
- 4 Of the 145 new homes built, we will work with partners to ensure that at least 43 are new affordable homes.
- 5 Every 6 months we will prepare and publish a detailed report that shows the research and findings that influence how we make our decisions

- 6 We will monitor the usage of the Home Energy Advice Tamworth (HEAT) freephone number to ensure an increased number of residents are accessing this service
- 7 We will investigate your application and give you a decision on what we can do to help within 15 working days if you are homeless, or threatened with homelessness
- 8 We will inspect all properties that have an application for a Bond to ensure that it is a safe home and issue a decision on your application within 10 working days
- 9 Working with partners, we will help you with other housing related problems, such as debt, by referring you when appropriate to specialist support agencies within 2 working days of your interview
- 10 We will process your fully completed application for housing and give you an indication of your priority on the list within 28 days



# Quick links

## Housing Advice:

Telephone: 01827 709459

[Link to Housing Advice on the website](#)

Email: [housingadvice@tamworth.gov.uk](mailto:housingadvice@tamworth.gov.uk)

## Housing Strategy:

Telephone: 01827 709700

[Link to Housing Strategy on the website](#)

Email: [housingstrategy@tamworth.gov.uk](mailto:housingstrategy@tamworth.gov.uk)



We are always looking for ways to improve our services and are keen to hear the views of our customers and partners. Should you wish to comment on any of the above standards or the quality of the service you received, please get in touch with the person who has been assisting you or who has sent you a letter.

## Other Links

Age Concern and help the aged are now one organisation giving advice and support for those in later life.

[Link to age.uk.com](http://age.uk.com)

*link to web page*

We have 'Tell Us' forms on which you can make comments, suggest how we can improve services or make a formal complaint. These forms are available in our reception or you can contact us directly on 01827 709 709 and we will send you one in the post, alternatively you can fill in an [online form on our website](#).

*link to web page*

If you or someone you know, require this information in an alternative format such as Large Print, Braille, Audio Tape and PC disk please contact The Housing Strategy Team on 01827 709 700 or email [housingstrategy@tamworth.gov.uk](mailto:housingstrategy@tamworth.gov.uk)



## Useful documents:

Housing Strategy (pdf)

Homelessness Strategy (pdf)

Strategic Housing Market Assessment (pdf)

Private Sector Stock Condition Survey (word)

Affordable Housing Viability and Policy Study (pdf)

Gypsy and Travellers Accommodation Assessment (pdf)

DRAFT Healthier Housing Strategy 2011-14 (pdf)

