

Your Guide to Homeless Services

(March 2021 Edition)



What is Homeless Services?

Our aim is to provide high quality short-term accommodation together with a dedicated team who provide a visiting support service for people who are faced with homelessness. Our support is to help people through the crisis they face and to prepare them to successfully move on to their own independent tenancies.

We have 20 self-contained flats in total across 2 sites, both of which are near to local amenities and good public transport links.

It is important to us that people feel positive about where they live; at one of our sites is a communal garden with children's play equipment.

- Our accommodation is affordable and eligible for Housing Benefit for people on low incomes.
- Access to a 24-hour emergency repair contractor.
- Our communal areas are subject to regular health & safety checks
- Support staff are well trained for their role.

We offer help, guidance and advice such as:

- Claiming welfare benefits
- Help in sorting out debt problems and budgeting
- Support and encouragement in career choices and gaining qualifications (e.g. keeping you up to date with where and what courses are available, help with forms and CVs and accompanying you to appointments)
- Keeping you motivated and involved in decision making
- Contact other services/ agencies on your behalf

Who can apply?

Our Homeless Services is for homeless people aged 18 years + who need support and accommodation. Applications from people aged 16 to 17 can be considered if they have a trustee to act as a guarantor in place. The service is here to help single people, single parent families, and couples with or without children.

*Please note if you don't live in Tamworth we may not be able to assist you but we can help you to find local services to you that can.

To find out more you can email us at: HomelessServices@tamworth.gov.uk

What happens next?

We aim to contact you the next working day and make an appointment with you to assess your needs. A friend or relative can be with you and your application may be placed on our waiting list. If we are unable to help, we will explain why and how you can appeal.

You are offered a flat - what next?

You will have the opportunity to view the flat at which point you will need to decide to offer the service. You will be asked to:

- Read and sign your agreement, provide next of kin details
- Complete housing benefit forms if appropriate. Provide ALL necessary proofs of ID
- Pay one week's rent in advance if not claiming full housing benefit and agree a date for you to collect the keys



Moving into your new home

Our accommodation is not furnished. You will need to bring with you;

- Furniture, food, bedding, crockery, cutlery, cooking utensils, towels, toiletries, cleaning materials, 60 watt replacement light bulbs. If you need help in getting together these items, we can put you in touch with agencies who can
- Your flat will be cleaned before you move in, after which it is your responsibility to maintain
- You will be given a payment card to pay your rent which can be used at any post office and retail outlets with Pay point facilities
- You will be responsible for paying your own gas, electric and water bills



Supported Housing Team

You will have a dedicated support worker who will develop your personal support plan with you to help you take control of your life and ready to move on in the future. The aim of this plan is to write down clearly what you want to achieve and what action we need to take to help you achieve it.

The support will be more frequent to begin with, as we know there is a lot to get organised when you first move into our scheme. The visits/contact will then reduce to weekly, to monthly and end after two years, having given time to work through your support plan goals.

How we can support you

Home visits and telephone call support – the dates and times will be planned. The support will focus on what is important to you, which could be going to college, learning skills, parenting, your health, as well as staying in control of your life.

We'll discuss your finances with you, check your rent account balance, offer advice and guidance for budgeting, dealing with debts, claiming benefits, as well as advice on looking for employment.

If you have an emergency between your home visits, please call the team and we will contact you within 24 hours during weekdays.

You will be given a pack of useful names and contact numbers to help you should you be in a crisis.



Your commitments

- ✓ To work with us and agree an action plan of support, to help you settle in your new home, that prepares you to live independently
- ✓ To keep to the tenancy agreements terms & conditions
- ✓ Staff must be treated with respect and courtesy

Our commitments to you

- ✓ You can challenge us if you think we have not provided a good service to you
- ✓ To provide sensitive and flexible support
- ✓ Keeping your personal information safe and what you tell us confidential (unless it is a criminal offence or involves the safeguarding of children or a vulnerable adult)
- ✓ With your agreement, we will make referrals to partner agencies to meet any needs that we cannot support you with
- ✓ Together we will have a Support Plan meeting at least every 6 months, but it may be important that this happens more often if your circumstances change
- ✓ The team is also responsible for the scheme as a whole, including communal facilities and making sure that fire and safety regulations are met



Please note that Support staff are unable to:

- Give medicines to tenants. A doctor, nurse or relative must do this
- Pay bills, loan or borrow money

- Provide domestic or personal care services, such as preparing meals or assisting with bathing or do your shopping for you, baby sit children
- Provide 24-hour assistance
- Provide you with lifts to appointments

How long can I stay?

Up to 2 years. This will allow us time to work together and help you through the crisis of becoming homeless.

After this time, we will help you to find secure accommodation.

Homeless Services is a specialised service that equips people with the skills and abilities to successfully move on to manage their own successful, independent tenancies in the future.

You will be expected to work with the team and make use of the support that is available, if not the place will be offered to someone else from our waiting list and you will be asked to leave the scheme.



Equal opportunities

Tamworth Borough Council has a policy of equal opportunities in employment and services provided. We want to make sure that we treat everyone fairly according to his or her needs and not discriminate against you on the basis of age, gender, race, colour, ethnic or national origin, disability or sexual orientation.

We will resist and challenge racist and sexist comments or any other offensive comments or abuse or threatening behaviour.



How can I find out more?

If you are faced with homelessness and would like to know more, the fastest way to contact us is through email: HomelessServices@tamworth.gov.uk

You can also contact us on 01827 899428 Monday to Friday 9am – 5pm. Outside of these hours you will be connected to an answer phone, please leave your contact details and we will contact you as soon as we possibly can.

Alternative formats

If you require this information in another format or language, please phone **01827 709709**, or email enquiries@tamworth.gov.uk