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Introduction

Welcome to your new home. We hope you will be very happy here. This handbook is full of useful information and advice. Please keep it in a safe place where you can find it easily.

If you need further information or have a question about our service at any time, please speak to your Support Worker or phone 01827 899428.
What is Supported Housing?
What does supported housing offer?

The service is here to help homeless people; this can be single people, single parent families, and couples with or without children, all who have faced the difficulties of homelessness.

Our accommodation is let unfurnished.

We are a dedicated team who provides temporary accommodation and support to help you through homelessness. We offer help, guidance and advice, this can be about.

1 Economic wellbeing
   ✔ maximising income and/or claiming benefit
   ✔ reducing debt
   ✔ obtaining work

2 Enjoy and achieve
   ✔ Participate in training, education, leisure and/or learning activities
   ✔ Establish contact with external groups, agencies, friends and/or family

3 Be healthy
   ✔ Better manage physical and mental health

4 Stay safe
   ✔ Maintain accommodation and avoid eviction
   ✔ Keeping self safe from harm and others

5 Making a positive contribution
   ✔ Develop confidence and ability to have
   ✔ choice, control and/or involvement
What type of support will I be given?

Our aim is to help you live independently through support and advice. This support helps you to set up and maintain your own home. We can negotiate with agencies for such as DWP, Housing Management, Housing Benefits, Council Tax and Social Services. We can help you keep appointments, fill out forms, make official telephone calls, advocate on your behalf, access education/employment training, social events, establish contact with external groups.

This support is provided on an individual basis in your own home. You will be allocated a Support Worker who will work with you.

How long can I live in Supported Housing?

People stay with us for varying lengths of time but are usually between 6 months and two years dependent on their individual needs.

Our overall aim is to ensure you develop the skills and stability to enable you to `move on` and maintain your own tenancy in the future, regardless of where you move to when you leave us.

What we believe in

We aim to provide services that are equally available to everyone. We believe that everyone should be treated fairly and live in a place free from the threat of abuse.

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

We will

- Help you be as independent as possible
- Treat you with courtesy, honesty and respect your dignity
- Give you enough information to help you make the right choices
- Listen and learn from what others tell us about the services you receive
- Take your views into account and fully involve you in all decisions
- Treat you fairly based on your level of need and not discriminate against
you because of your age, gender, race, colour, ethnic or national origin, disability or sexual orientation

- Help you if your first language is not English or if you need help which completing forms or receiving information from staff
- Respond to all reports of racial harassment and victimisation made by tenants with one working day
- Treat your personal information as confidential

Because of this you will be able to complain about the service you receive without being victimised; and be able to live peacefully in your home without harassment or interference from others.

**What I can expect from my Support Worker?**

Within 48 hours of moving in your Support Worker will sit and talk you through the facilities and activities that are available on or near your scheme. They will also let you know the hours they are available. They will also cover what they can and cannot do for you as part of their role.

**Your Support Worker can:**
- visit you in your own home
- agree a support plan with you and encourage to you achieve desired outcomes
- encourage you to be independent and participate in activities and/or learning
- give you information about local facilities
- help you keep in touch with your family, friends and other agencies
- respond to emergencies during duty hours
- help you to access services
- advise and support about, staying safe, economic wellbeing, health, enjoying/achieving, making a positive contribution
- We can help you keep appointments, fill out forms, make official telephone calls and advocate on your behalf
Whilst your Support Worker is there to help you, they cannot:

- clean or do housework
- help with DIY projects
- shop
- collect money/benefits or pay bills
- do your laundry
- cook you meals
- help you with your personal care, including help with any medication
- provide you with their home phone number
- transport you in their car

There will be times when your Support Worker is away due to holiday, staff training, (which we consider to be an important part of their role) or sickness. On these occasions we will, wherever possible, arrange for another Support Worker to visit you.

**Weekly Visits**

Your Support Worker will visit you at least once a week and stay for about an hour; but these times do vary according to people’s individual needs. These appointments are to help create changes in your life. This could be through problem solving supporting you in contacting agencies and other services to ensure you receive the right support, as well as taking the time to see how well you are managing. Regular coffee mornings are also held at the schemes for everyone to come along.

Support Workers will not enter your home unless you invite them. They will not knock and walk in.

Your Support Worker will not enter your home without your prior permission or if you are not there unless:

- you call for help
- you, your neighbours or other residents are in danger

In any of these events, your Support Worker will make sure that your home is left secure afterwards.

On some rare occasions, such as very bad weather, your Support Worker may have a problem visiting you. If this happens we will telephone you.
How you can help your Support Worker
There are a number of ways you can help make our service better for you, including:

- Let your Support Worker know when you will be unavailable for your visit. For example, if you are attending a doctor’s appointment or are visiting a friend please let us know.
- Give your Support Worker all the information they might need in an emergency, such as how to get hold of your next of kin and your doctor’s details. Your Support Worker will keep this with your Support Plan so if any details change – such as your next of kin’s phone number - please let them know straightaway.
- Don’t let anyone into your home or into the scheme if you don’t know who they are and why they are calling. Ask to see identity cards, keep doors locked and ask your visitors to do the same.

What happens if you don’t engage with your Support Worker and/or support available?

As Supported Housing is specialist accommodation available for people who need support and advice, Tamworth Borough Council will terminate your tenancy if you don’t make use of the support that is available.

To engage you must:
- attend appointments with your Support Worker
- work towards achieving your agreed work plan

Let your Support Worker know when you will be unavailable for your visit or appointment/activities which have been arranged. For example, if you are attending a doctor’s appointment or visiting a friend, please let us know as it will stop us worrying about you and we can make alternative arrangements for your appointments.
How to contact your Support Worker?

You can contact your Support Worker and/or the Supporting Housing Team Monday to Friday 9am – 5pm.

Telephone: 01827 899428.

In the event of an emergency outside of office hours when your Support Worker is off duty, you must contact Tamworth Borough Council on 01827 709709 and follow the instructions given.

How to contact Tamworth Borough Council

During open hours you can contact Tamworth Borough Council on 01827 709709 or visit us at Tamworth Borough Council, Marmion House, Lichfield Street, Tamworth B79 7BZ. Alternately information is available on our website www.tamworth.gov.uk.

Emergency Contacts

**Dental Emergencies** call your own dentist or NHS Direct 08 45 46 47

**Minor Injuries** can be treated at Sir Robert Peel Hospital, Tamworth, open 24 hours per day, 7 days a week

**Mental Health Support & Advice**
free helpline call Saturday & Sunday between 2pm – 2am 0808 800 2234
Outside of these times leave a message & they will call you back

**Emergency Contraception** is available from your GP/chemist & Tamworth Health Clinic, Upper Gungate open on Saturdays 10.15am–12.30pm

**Tamworth Borough Council**
01827 709709 (out of office hours following the instructions given)

**Housing Repairs**
(24 hours) call 0800 183 0044
Need someone to talk to? Text or call your Support Worker.
Fiona: 07528 630057, Louise: 07528 630058 or Trudy: 07528 630059.

**Gifts to staff**

Whilst we appreciate you will probably become very friendly with your Support Worker, they must act in a professional way at all times.

For example, we understand that sometimes you may want to thank your Support Worker or celebrate a special occasion by giving them a gift. We have strict rules on what staff can and cannot accept so it may be that your Support Worker is unable to take it, so please do not be offended if this happens. Your Support Worker can explain more about this if required.
What is a Star Outcome Support Plan?

When you move in to your new home, your Support Worker will discuss what difficulties you are facing and what help you want to create changes to enable you to maintain your own tenancy in the future, regardless of where you move to when you leave us. As part of this process they will complete a form called a Star Outcome Support Plan with you. This plan helps record the type and level of support you might need to create these changes in your life. You obviously have an important part to play in the process, so you must be happy with what is being discussed. If there is anything you do not agree with, please let your Support Worker know. Your support plan helps us make sure that the service we provide is tailored to your individual needs and requirements.

Your Support Worker will review your Support Plan every six months or earlier if there is a change in your circumstances, so please keep your Support Worker up to date with any information that may affect your health and welfare. You can also ask your Support Worker for a review at any time you wish. You are entitled to keep a copy of your Support Plan for your own records. If you would like a copy simply ask your Support Worker.

Working with other organisations

As mentioned before, part of your Support Worker’s job is to liaise with other agencies, such as DWP, Housing Management, Housing Benefits, Council Tax and Social Services, to help put in place any additional support or assistance you might need. Depending on your individual needs you may receive support from a number of different agencies.

This means that your Support Worker will need to discuss some of your personal details with other agencies or organisations. However they will only do this with your prior agreement, or if there is an emergency situation and they feel you are at risk of harm. Please be assured that your Support Worker will never discuss your personal details or situation with other residents. As a company, we treat breaches of confidentiality very seriously.
Cultural and Religious backgrounds & places of worship

We recognise and respect different beliefs and religions. We encourage all our tenants to keep their own religious affiliations.

For all the latest news about local community events and activities, please talk to the Support Worker.

Please refer to back page of this booklet for a full list of places of worship in the Tamworth Area.

How can friends and family help?

It is important that friends, family and other carers continue to provide support for people who move into temporary accommodation. Wherever possible, the support staff will try to involve any carers and, with prior permission, will keep them informed of your health and well being.
What carers can expect from us?

We are committed to recognising the role of carers and to involving them whenever possible. This might be by:

- Being involved in assessments, wherever possible we will work together with the carer and cared for person to arrange for services that respond to individual needs

We will
- Recognise and record the role of carers
- Direct carers to sources of advice on benefits and support to help them to continue in the caring role
- Carers Helpline details
Section 3

In Your Home
Paying your Rent & Bills

You are responsible for paying all rent, service and support charges, council tax whilst a tenant of your home. Support charges relate to the cost of your Support Worker.

We have a number of different ways you can pay your rent and charges including Direct Debit, using your Allpay Card at your local Post Office or any shop/outlet displaying the PayPoint sign, online at www.tamworth.gov.uk, or over the phone 01827 709709.

You may be entitled to help to pay your rent and service/support charges. If you would like to find out more information to see whether you may be able to receive some help, please speak to your Support Worker or contact our Income Collection Team on 01827 709709.

Within the first month your Support Worker can carry out a financial statement with you. We would urge everyone to do this. This will cover what your income is, make sure you are claiming all the benefits you are entitled to and any debts you may have. Your Support Worker can help you make repayment agreements for loans, debts and outstanding bills that you can afford to pay.

Council Tax

This can be arranged for weekly payments, contact council tax on 709709. Remember to complete a single person discount if there is only one adult over 18 in the property.

TV Licence

Arrangements can be made to pay weekly if you are on low income, monthly or quarterly.
Home Contents Insurance

While Tamworth Borough Council is responsible for insuring the building, we do not cover the contents of your home. We therefore strongly advise all our tenants to take out a home contents insurance policy. For example, if you had a fire or your freezer defrosted following a mains power cut, then we would not provide compensation.

We do offer a low cost home contents insurance in conjunction with ROYAL SUN ALLIANCE, if you would like to find out more about this please speak to your Support Worker.

No Pets

We do not allow residents to keep pets on our schemes as you do not have your own garden.

Using Your Home

If you leave your home for more than four weeks you must tell your Support Worker, in order that we do not presume you have abandoned your property.

You must not:

- use portable oil, paraffin or gas cylinder heaters in your home
- store inflammable materials or gas cylinders in the property or in the garden
- store any vehicles or appliances that are powered by petrol, diesel, or paraffin
- Interfere with any equipment of putting out fires in the property or in shared areas
- Remove batteries or otherwise disable smoke or carbon monoxide alarms in the property
- Throw anything out of the windows
- Delay telling your Support Worker about any damage to your property
- Charge batteries for any powered vehicle in communal areas
Hygiene

You must keep the property clean and tidy ensuring that you don’t leave any personal belongings or rubbish in communal areas or we will remove anything you leave in the area. We will not be responsible for any loss suffered by yourself if we remove items left by yourself in shared areas.

You must contact your Support Worker if your property becomes infested with mice, rats or other pests.

Anti Social Behaviour

The Council has a policy statement and procedure for dealing with cases of anti social behaviour. We want residents to be able to enjoy living in their home and in the community. We recognise that people have different lifestyles and that peoples standards of behaviour vary. We will attempt to ensure however, that actions of a minority of tenants do not make the lives of the majority of our tenants a misery and we will therefore take action against tenants who we believe are acting anti-socially. This may include possession action that could lead to your eviction.

While living in a Tamworth Borough Council property you, your friends and relatives and any other person living in or visiting the property must not do the following:

- Do anything which causes or is likely to cause a nuisance to anyone in the area
- Do anything which interferes with the peace, comfort or convenience of other people living in the area
- Harrass anyone in the local area because of their race, nationality, sexuality, sex, religion, or disability
- Use the property for any criminal, immoral or illegal purpose
• Harass or threaten to harass or use violence towards anyone in the local area including employees of Tamworth Borough Council, councillors or anyone living in the property
• Damage either deliberately or negligently any property owned by Tamworth Borough Council

Services

Electric Central Heating (Edenfield and Ellerbeck)
Remember that you will have to pay your own electricity bill.

Gas Central Heating (Chestnut Court)
Remember you will need to pay your own gas bill.

Communal Cleaning and Electricity (Chestnut Court)
There is a weekly charge which covers communal cleaning and communal electricity

Cold Water Supply
Remember that you do not have to pay a water bill this is included in your service charge.

Mains drinking water is provided to the cold tap to the kitchen sink.

Your Support Worker will advise you on the location of the stopcock. Please check that you know where it is and that you can turn it off easily as you need to turn off the supply if you have a leak. Please contact the repairs call centre if you have any problems with this.
Recycling and Refuse Service

Your black wheelie bin is for general waste and is emptied every other week. Your bin should be stored in your bin cupboard near your front door and not left outside.

Your blue recycling bin is collected fortnightly. In these bins you can put all your cans, paper, plastics, cardboard and glass.

If you want to dispose of bulky items such as unwanted furniture, please contact the Service Team. There is charge. Tel 0845 0020022.

At Chestnut Court the general waste is emptied into the communal bin.
Looking after your home

You are responsible for keeping the interior of the premises in good and clean condition.

Reporting Repairs
You must take proper care of the property and report any faults, repairs or defects to us immediately.

The Council operates a 24 hour emergency repairs service, the freephone number is 0800 183 0044. The out of hours service operates only for genuine emergencies.

Alternatively if your Support Worker is on duty and available to speak to then you can report your repair this way.

Furniture and Electrical Goods
All our flats are carpeted, decorated and furnished to a high standard. We also provide you with a cooker and fridge freezer. When you move into your new home you will be asked to sign for the condition of these. Any faults need to be reported to your Support Worker. You will be recharged for any damage caused to the flat, the contents provided or if any items are missing when you move out.
What do you do if you get Condensation?
Every home gets condensation at some time. Please follow the advice below:

- Keep your home warm
- Do not dry washing indoors
- When windows are misted up, open the window a little
- When cooking use lids on pans and do not allow to boil any longer than necessary

Any mould growth can be washed down with a suitable cleaning solution.

**Cooker**
Electric cookers have been provided; please clean them on a regular basis.

**Floors/Carpets**
The kitchen and bathroom floors in your home are covered with vinyl sheeting. These can be cleaned with warm, soapy water and general domestic detergent. Please do not use solvent-based cleaners or polish.

**Loft Space**
The loft space IS NOT intended for storage. The access hatch is provided for maintenance purposes only.

**Plumbing**
To prevent blockages please do not flush nappies, cloths or towels down the toilet.

**Windows and Ventilation**
Windows should be cleaned occasionally with soapy water.

Your home has been fitted with fans in the kitchen and bathroom.
Section 4

Communal Areas
Cleaning in communal centres

Communal areas, such as garden and laundry are cleaned regularly as part of the service we provide.

We would like to remind you that all residents are responsible for tidying up after using a communal area and must make sure it is clean, tidy and ready for use by someone else.

If you have a problem with cleaning on your scheme, please let your Support Worker know.

Smoking

In July 2007, it became illegal to smoke in public places, which includes all communal areas on our schemes. You are therefore forbidden from smoking in the communal areas on our schemes as it is against the law. It can also be very unpleasant for others, especially those with asthma or who have breathing difficulties.

Smoking is allowed in the communal gardens but please do not stand near to a doorway or window and make sure that you take any cigarette butts and dispose of them within your own property, ensuring they are no longer a fire hazard.

Whilst we realise it is up to you whether you smoke within your own home, we would be grateful if you could show consideration for any of our staff who come and visit you. We know it is your home but there are times, such as when we come to carry out a repair, when it becomes our ‘work place’. If you know your Support Worker or someone from Tamworth Borough Council is coming to see you in your home we would ask that you avoid smoking in the same room as them whilst they are there. If you decide to smoke in front of our staff we have advised them that they are allowed to leave your home without finishing their work. This also applies if a contractor is coming to your home to carry out work on our behalf.
**Notice Boards**

In the communal area of our schemes there is a notice board which will show a range of information about your scheme and the surrounding community. Your Support Worker will show you where the notice board is and can arrange for information to be included on the board.

Your Support Worker is responsible for keeping the board up to date. On every notice board will be:

- Days and times your Support Worker is available to be contacted
- Upcoming events at the scheme
- Details of the place of worship for all religions
- Details of local doctors’ surgeries, clinics, dentists and chemists
- Emergency contact phone numbers
- Local bus timetable and taxi/Dial-a-Ride numbers
- Information on local shops and post offices, including opening times
- Details of local clubs; and
- Information on Tamworth Borough Council Housing

Nearby will also be a leaflet stand or dispenser which will have our service standards and information leaflets available.

**Parking spaces**

Car parking spaces are provided at most of our schemes and are available for residents to use, unless they are on your own personal driveway.

Please be considerate when parking and do not park on pavements and walkways which may be needed for access by wheelchair users or emergency services.
Communal Gardens

Some schemes have communal gardens which are for use by all residents and Tamworth Borough Council will maintain the lawned areas on a regular basis. However, if you would like to ‘adopt’ an area to look after please speak to your Support Worker.
Bogus Callers

Please only let people into your home, or into the scheme, that you know and trust. There are many bogus callers around and to protect you and your neighbours it is important that they are kept out of your home and scheme. They will use various excuses to get in – for example, they may say they are from the water company or even from Tamworth Borough Council. It is therefore important that you keep both front and back doors locked – never leave them unlocked or ajar, even if you are popping out to see your neighbour.

Before letting anyone into your home or the scheme:

• STOP – before you answer the door to a caller, stop and think if you are expecting anyone
• CHECK – that your door is closed and locked. If you have a back door check it is locked too and take the key out of the lock
• CHAIN – put your door bar or chain on. If you have a glass panel or spy hole fitted look to see who it is before you open the door. Always keep the bar or chain on while you talk to the person on your doorstep
• CHECK again – Ask to see the person’s identity card and check it carefully, even if they have a prearranged appointment. All genuine callers will carry a card. Close the door while you check their card. Does the person look like the photograph on the card? If you are not expecting them, DO NOT let them in until you have checked their identity card and if necessary called their company to check they are genuine
• PHONE CHECKS – Check the company’s number in the phone book and make sure it is the same as the one on the identity card. If necessary ring the company but use the number in the phone book not the one on the identity card to make sure

If the person calling is genuine they will not mind waiting while you make these checks. If you have any doubts at all, do not let them in. If you have any concerns or suspicions tell your Support Worker or phone the Police.

All Tamworth Borough Council staff and the contractors who work for us carry identity cards and should show them to you before entering your home. If you are unsure if the person works for, or on behalf of, Tamworth Borough Council, please contact your Support Worker and they will be happy to double check for you.

Remember, it is always better to be safe than sorry.
Dealing with Abuse

What is abuse?
When most people think of abuse they think of physical abuse, such as hitting or slapping. However abuse can happen in a number of different ways including:

- **Physical** – for example, hitting, slapping or pushing
- **Verbal or Psychological or emotional** – for example, shouting or swearing
- **Financial or material abuse** – for example, taking money out of your purse or bank account
- **Sexual** – for example, forcing you to do things you do not want to do
- **Neglect** – for example, not helping someone to wash or eat
- **Racial or spiritual discrimination** – for example, not respecting someone’s religious beliefs, racial background
- **Psychological abuse** – for example, threats of harm or abandonment, emotional or verbal abuse, humiliation and intimidation

Abuse is a violation of an individual’s human and civil rights by any person or persons.

Abuse can also happen anywhere from within someone’s own home to a day care centre. In many cases, the abuser is usually well known to the person being abused and could be:

- A partner, child or relative
- A friend or neighbour
- A paid or volunteer care worker
- A health or social worker or other professional

There are many reasons why someone may be abused but whatever the reason it is not the fault of the person who is suffering abuse.
What happens if I am abused?

- If you are suffering from abuse or are worried that one of your neighbours on the scheme may be being abused, whether physically, emotionally or financially, please talk to your Support Worker
- Alternatively you can call:
  - the Samaritans, 24 hour helpline, Telephone 08457 90 90 90 for confidential help and advice
  - Contact John Coombes Independent Living Coordinator on (01827) 709436 Monday to Friday 9am – 5pm. You can also request a private appointment or write to the Housing Options Manager at:
    - Marmion House
    - Lichfield Street
    - Tamworth
    - B79 7BN

Your concerns will be treated sensitively and in confidence.

How to Report Concerns about Child or vulnerable adult

If a child or vulnerable adult is in immediate danger or if a crime has been committed contact the Emergency Services immediately on 999.

If you have a concern about the welfare of a child or vulnerable adult please contact your Support Worker or alternatively:

Child Protection Concerns:
Staffordshire County Council First Response Team on 0800 1313126 or Staffordshire Police Central Referrals unit on 0300 1234455.

Outside the hours of 8.00am and 6.00pm all child protection concerns need to be made to the vulnerable child division emergency duty service on 01785 354030.

For vulnerable adult safeguarding issues
age 18 and above:
Contact Staffordshire Social Care and Health on 0845 6042719.
Hate Incidents

Hate incidents have the potential to be extremely detrimental in people’s lives and in wider society. They can cause great personal harm and damage to community relations.

Tamworth Borough Council and its partners are committed to ensuring good relations between all people within the Borough. To make certain that we play an active and prominent role in monitoring and reducing hate incidents, the local authority has devised a Hate Crime reporting system. Its purpose is to identify incidents in the Borough involving employees, customers and councillors; and deliver a consistent professional approach to reduce and eliminate this particular often hidden problem.

For a copy of Tamworth Borough Council Hate Incident Policy, please speak to your Support Worker who will be happy to obtain you a copy. Alternatively please see our website for a copy at www.tamworth.gov.uk.

What is a Hate Incident?

A hate incident is any incident committed against a person or property that the victim or any other person believes is motivated by the offender’s hate against people because of their race, sexuality, disability, religion, age or gender.

Hate incidents can include the following areas:

- **Race**: on the grounds of a person’s racial identity or perceived racial identity
- **Sexual Orientation**: on the grounds of a person’s sexual orientation or perceived sexual orientation
- **Gender**: on the grounds of a person’s gender
- **Disability**: on the ground of a person’s disability or perceived disability.
- **Religion or belief**: on the basis of a person’s religion or belief (including no belief) or perceived membership of a religious group
- **Age**: on the basis of a person’s age or perceived age

Some hate incidents will be criminal offences. The term hate incident includes crimes and non-crimes.
Examples of Hate Incidents

It should be noted that this list is not exhaustive or comprehensive but is meant to provide some examples:

- Physical assault against a person or group
- Harassment or intimidation
- Bullying
- Verbal abuse & threats
- Assault
- Damage to person or property
- Malicious phone calls
- Threatening behaviour
- Arson
- Offensive jokes or comments
- Offensive graffiti & fly posting (e.g. of a racist or homophobic nature)
- Ridicule for cultural differences (e.g. language, dress, food music etc)

How to report a Hate Incident

If you are a victim or witness and feel the incident was hate, please report the matter immediately to the Police as well as your Support Worker, your concerns will be treated sensitively and in confidence.
Section 6

Social events and getting involved
Social and recreational activities

As mentioned in Section 4, ‘Communal Areas’, the communal garden is available to use for social and recreational activities. You can decide what activities you would like and how often you would like them and we would encourage you to arrange these for the benefit of all residents.

Your Support Worker will help you set them up and publicise them on and around the scheme. Before setting a date it is best to check with your Support Worker that the garden has not already been pre-booked.

If you live in a scheme which has no communal facilities you can ask your Support Worker about events at your nearest communal scheme.

Have your say

Tamworth Borough Council is keen to get as many tenants involved in helping to plan our services as well as with what happens on your own scheme.

We would therefore like to encourage you to set up or join a resident group for your particular scheme so that you can discuss the issues you feel are most important to you and your neighbours. You may also feel that you would like a member of your family or your carer to come along to these group meetings as well.

For more information on setting up a residents group for your scheme or to find out how you can get more involved with improving our services, please contact our Tenant Participation team on 01827 709374.
General Health & Safety on communal areas

As part of their everyday role, your Support Worker carries out a number of regular safety checks on your scheme. Each month they will complete fire blanket checks. These checks are recorded in the scheme log book. They will also carry out a monthly site check and report any concerns they may have, such as problems on a path which may be a potential trip hazard. However if you see something that you are concerned about then please tell your Support Worker.

We would ask that you keep the areas around your property clear, tidy and free from clutter to ensure the safety of everyone who uses the scheme.

If you have any concerns about safety issues on your scheme at any time please let your Support Worker know.

Fire Blanket

This is situated on the wall in the kitchen and can be used on electrical equipment and flammable liquid fires. If you feel you can contain a fire please use it but if in doubt leave the property and dial 999. Remember to shut all doors on your way out. The fire blanket is checked monthly and if used you should contact the Supporting Housing Team for a replacement.

Smoke Alarm

Each property has a either a battery operated or mains electric smoke alarm installed. These should be checked regularly and if faulty please report to the Repairs Call centre.

The smoke alarms are checked monthly by your Support Worker.
Fire Precautions and Safety

Fire Prevention:

• Take care when cooking and never leave your cooker unattended when it is on
• Do not use your cooker to dry tea towels or clothing on
• If you smoke in your home (not permitted in any of the communal areas), be very careful when putting out your matches and cigarettes
• Never smoke in bed
• If you have an electric blanket get it tested at least once a year to make sure it is safe to use
• If there is a power cut, keep a working torch handy as this may be better than using candles. If you do use candles, never leave them unattended
• If you are not using an electrical appliance switch it off at the socket. This not only reduces the risk of it over heating, but also saves you money
• If you live in a block of flats or on a scheme with internal corridors, it is important to keep fire doors shut at all times and fire exits free of any clutter. Do not wedge fire doors open in the corridors as this allows the fire to spread faster and more easily

Fire in your home:

As soon as you become aware of a fire in your home you need to act quickly and calmly.

1. Alert everyone – make sure everyone in your home knows about the fire. The easiest way is to shout and get everyone together

2. Get out immediately and:
   • Do not attempt to tackle the fire
   • When escaping from your home, only open the doors you need to. Before opening any doors first put the back of your hand on the door – if it is warm DO NOT open it as this most likely means that the fire is on the other side
   • If you live in a block of flats, leave using the nearest fire exit
• Dial 999 and raise the alarm with the emergency services
  Do not re-enter the building
  Wait in a safe place for the emergency services to arrive

If you are unable to get out of your home:

• Try to close the door of the room where the fire is located
• If possible place wet cushions, bedding, clothes etc at the bottom of the door to stop smoke seeping through
• Move to the furthest room away from the fire that has windows closing all doors behind you
• Open the window to the room, stand by it and shout or make a noise to alert people of your presence
• If the room you are in starts to fill with smoke, lie on the floor or keep as low as possible, as there will usually be less smoke nearer the floor

Fire elsewhere on the scheme:

If you hear or see that there is a fire on the scheme:

• Remain in your home unless told otherwise
• If possible close all doors and windows to your property
• Never attempt to fight the fire yourself
• Do not use stair lifts or walk around the building
• Do not put yourself at risk
• Always co-operate with the emergency services
Legionella

Although it is fairly rare, you may have heard of occasional outbreaks of Legionnaires Disease. This disease is actually caused by bacteria, called Legionella, which can cause breathing problems if someone breathes in small water droplets contaminated by these bacteria. Most outbreaks seem to start in businesses or large buildings, but there is a low risk that the bacteria can cause a problem in your home.

Although it is only a low risk within the home, we have completed a number of checks throughout our Supported Housing Schemes to make sure you are as safe as possible.

However in order to help you stay safe in your home there are things you can do to minimise the risk of legionella.

- **Shower heads**: Clean the shower head on a regular basis. If you have been away for longer than a week, run the shower for a minute or two before using it.
- **Water tanks**: If you have been away for a period of time, especially in the warmer months, run the water on low pressure for a few minutes to flush the system. Keep the lid on your water cisterns.
- **Drinking water filter jugs (for example, Brita types)**: Keep in the fridge, keep clean, and do not leave water in the container for long periods.
- **Taps**: Keep taps clean and free from scale where possible. If you have been away for over a week let the taps run slowly for 2-3 minutes when you arrive back.
- **Toilets**: If you have been away for a week or so it is advised that you put the toilet seat down and flush the toilet.
- If you have any concerns about Legionella, please speak to your Support Worker.
Tamworth Borough Council has a clear commitment to equality and diversity. We believe that everyone should have fair and equal access to our services.

The council serves a diverse borough so getting services right for all of our residents is important. When we deliver services we must ensure that we do not discriminate in a way that is unfair, illegal or unjustified. Getting this right can mean that we need to tailor our services to ensure that everyone can access them.

We think we can do this by listening and working with all sections of the community. We must be prepared to engage people, especially hard to reach groups, in a way which encourages greater participation and dialogue in the decision making process. We can then change what needs to be changed.

A great deal of work is already being done and significant progress has been made, but we recognise there is much more to do.

We have recently published our first Single Equality Scheme which outlines how we will promote diversity and equality in the delivery of our services provided both directly by ourselves and in conjunction with our partners.

All public authorities have a duty to set out their arrangements for assessing and consulting on the impact that their policies could have on the promotion of race, disability and gender equality. To meet this duty Equality Impact Assessments are carried out.

Tamworth Borough Council seeks to become an exemplary council and make sure our services are delivered fairly. To support this we ask for information on our customer’s ethnic origin, disability, gender, age, religion/ belief and sexual orientation. This information helps us improve the delivery of our services by targeting them at the right people.

To gain more detailed information about what we are doing, and how we are doing it, please speak to your Support Worker for more information alternatively please see our website www.tamworth.gov.uk.
Section 9

Your rights as a Tenant
As a tenant of Tamworth Borough Council you have certain legal rights. These along with your responsibilities, form part of your tenancy agreement. However, in addition, you also have the right to:

**Privacy**

- You have the right to privacy in your own home. Staff from Tamworth Borough Council will not enter your home, whether you are there or not, without your prior written permission unless there is an emergency situation.
- Although you have a Support Worker available to help where needed, this does not mean we will intrude into your daily life. We will respect your privacy at all times, unless you or others are at risk or there is a health and safety danger.

**Choice and Personal Freedom**

- As a Supported Housing Tenant you have the right to live independently within your own home and to make your own decisions. Your Support Worker is there to support you and help co-ordinate the services you might need to help you keep your independence for as long as possible.

**Dignity and respect**

- All individuals have the right to be treated with dignity and respect at all times, and living within a supported housing scheme does not reduce this right in any way.
• No-one should be harassed or discriminated against on any grounds, including age, disability, ethnicity and sexuality. If you experience any harassment or discrimination please let your Support Worker know immediately. If however, you feel that your Support Worker or any member of Tamworth Borough Council’s staff are discriminating against you, please report this to the Housing Options Manager on 01827 709474. We take all allegations seriously and will investigate your complaint as a matter of urgency.
• We would also ask that you, and any visitors, are considerate of your neighbours at all times, especially when using or entering/leaving any communal facilities.

Complaints

We welcome feedback from people who use our services. If your needs or rights have not been met it is important that we know so we can do something about it.

If you are unhappy with any part of the service, you should raise your concerns with your Support Worker as soon as possible. You can also discuss your concerns with the Independent Living Coordinator, telephone 01827 709436 or with the Housing Options Manager who is on 01827 709709.

If you are still unhappy with the response, then you may feel that you want to make a formal complaint. You can do this online at www.tamworth.gov.uk/making-complaint.

We will acknowledge your complaint with 14 days of receiving your form.

If it is not possible to give you an explanation within this time, we will tell you when you will get one. If after our investigation you still feel dissatisfied with the outcome, you may wish to complain to the Local Government ombudsman at Beverley House, 17 Shipton Road, York YO30 5FZ or on 01940 663200.
Your Personal Information

In order to provide you with the most effective service possible, it is necessary for us to collect and keep some of your personal information. You will give us most of this information when you sit and discuss your Support Plan with your Support Worker. This information is very important for a number of reasons, including:

- Helping us make sure your individual specific needs are met
- Being able to contact your named contacts in the event of an emergency

This information will be held on your Support Plan and on our computer systems. All Support Plans are kept in locked cabinets or filing boxes which are in a locked office. Our computer systems are password protected and can only be accessed by authorised staff.

All the information you give us will be kept in strict confidence. We will only discuss this information with other agencies, such as your doctor, if you agree or if there is an emergency situation and we feel you are at risk of harm. Please be assured that your Support Worker will never discuss your personal details or situation with other residents.

You also have the right to see a copy of all the information Tamworth Borough Council keeps about you. If you would like to do this please contact your Support Worker.
Moving on from Supported Housing
What is ‘Move on’?

`Move On` means where you will move to when you leave you Supported Housing.

Supported Housing is temporary accommodation. People stay with us for varying lengths of time but are usually between 6 months and two years dependent on their individual needs. So as part of your Support Plan your Support Worker will regularly discuss `Move On` with you.

Your Support Worker will provide support and help so that you can move onto accommodation, which is more independent and permanent.

What do I do when I feel ready for move on?

- Speak to your Support Worker
- When it has been agreed that you are ready to move on, your Support Worker will support you in applying to join Tamworth Borough Council housing waiting lists
- Your Support Worker will fill in a reference for your housing application with Tamworth Borough Council that confirms you are ready for move on. This will mean you will then be entitled to a high priority banding to enable you to be rehoused as quickly as possible
- Your Support Worker will be able to support you in bidding for advertised properties
- If you feel you may need support when you move, for example, to settle in to your new accommodation, help with bills or to set up payment for bills etc then you may need to be referred for floating support/outreach services. Arrangements can be made for this
- Your entitlement to a high band award with the Council is time limited and if you decline suitable properties offered it may lead the Council to review your banding priority
- If you decline properties and are ready to move on this may lead to us ending your tenancy with us
- If you would like to know what is happening about your application you should ask your Support Worker to contact the Housing Advice Team for an update
If your Support Worker decides that you are not ready for move-on, then a discussion will take place to identify ways to make sure you are ready in the future. For example, if the reason is because of a star action plan that needs to be worked through or things like rent arrears, you may need support in paying arrears off in installments, before they can support your move.

If you require any further information in relation to the above, please speak to your Support Worker.

What happens when I have been accepted for a property?

- The Council will inform you when you have been successful for a property and let you know the full address.
- You should then be offered a viewing and your Support Worker can go with you to look at the property if you wish.
- This will give you the opportunity to make sure that the flat/house is suitable and check that all the repairs are completed.
- You will need to inform the Council and Support Worker of your decision to either accept the property or not.

Your Support Worker will be able to help you out with the move such as;

- Reading your gas/electric meters in your new home.
- Completing a Housing Benefit Form.
- Change of address details.
- Who to inform of your move e.g. Benefits, GP’s, bank, post office, dentist, optician etc.
- Medication (Where you will collect this from or whether you need encouragement from Outreach services with your medication).
- Completing a Community Care Grant Form (if needed). You cannot complete the form until you have moved into the property. (The Community Care Grant is for things like furniture, cutlery, bedding, pots and pans etc).
- Arranging a removal van (if required).
Private Landlord

- You may wish to go into accommodation provided by a private landlord. If this is your preferred option then you should speak to your Support Worker about the advantages and disadvantages of this type of accommodation.

- Below is a list of areas which you should discuss with your Support Worker who will help you understand some issues about renting from a private landlord.

Areas to discuss

- Cost – a deposit is often required as well as a month’s rent upfront.
- Shortfall between rent and Local Housing Allowance (LHA) - a calculation could be done with your Support Worker on the figures given from LHA rates and how this will be paid and the importance of keeping receipts.
- Non-secure tenancy - tenancies with private landlords are usually less secure than tenancies with social landlords/housing associations and are only issued for a 6 month period. A section 21 can be served anytime after this period. Private landlords often serve Section 21 at the beginning of the tenancy with the tenancy agreement so it has already been signed by tenant and the landlord.
- Tenancy agreements may vary – read them carefully – read through any tenancy agreement with your Support Worker as this states how and when the rent is due and the rights and responsibilities of both yourself and the landlord.
- The Housing Advice team work with private landlords and will be able to give details of these.
- The Housing Advice team also offers a rent deposit scheme called a Bond scheme – this is a deposit bond which you can apply for if your landlord agrees to accept the bond. This is NOT money, this is a paper bond. The Bond scheme is criteria based and you will be asked to complete an income and expenditure form and other paper work before you are accepted.
- Budget/crisis loan for deposit. If you have been claiming Income Support or Job Seekers Allowance for more than 26 weeks you may be able to apply for a budget/crisis loan for a deposit.
Understand how to give notice and period of notice (i.e. 4 weeks and written) You could prepare an example letter with your Support Worker prior to moving in so you have a copy in case you need it

If you are not using the rent deposit scheme, make sure the landlord registers the deposit

Get saving:
- Save money at the beginning of time in Supported Housing. It is cheaper to live in Supported Housing than in independent living
- Your Support Worker should work with you around saving & budgeting if Private Landlord is an option.

With family, friends or return to previous home

If you decide you no longer require or want to be in supported accommodation and you would like to move in with your family or friends, staff can suggest floating support and will provide continual support throughout the process. This will form part of your star outcome plan and staff will support you.

How to end your tenancy

If you are thinking of moving out or want to leave your accommodation, please discuss this with your Support Worker who will be able to support you.

Some of the more important points to remember are:
- You must give us at least 28 days notice in writing
- You must return all the keys and leave the property in good condition, clean and tidy, removing all belongings and ensuring everyone moves with you
- If belongings are left, we can remove them but we will charge you for removal and disposal
Abandonment

If you leave your home without telling us, we will consider that you have abandoned it and we will automatically end the tenancy.

Moving out Checklist

Moving checklist
Careful organisation and forward planning can minimise the stress of moving house. Use our moving checklist in to guide you through the six weeks leading up to to moving day.

Six weeks before the move

- Confirm the date of your move
- Check your home insurance - make sure you have cover from the day you move in to your new home
- Obtain written quotes from several removal firms
  Get references and check the limits of their insurance
- If you’re not using professional removers, ask friends to help
- Book extra storage space if required
- Start getting rid of possessions you no longer need.
  Decide which items can be taken to a charity shop,
  sold at car boot sale, or offered to your friends
- If you need new furniture or carpets - order them now and arrange delivery for when you move in

Two weeks before moving

- Start packing non-essential items such as books and non-seasonal clothes into boxes
- De-register from your doctor, dentist and optician if you’re moving out of the area
- Visit the post office and arrange for your post to be forwarded (you will be charged a fee for this service)
• Notify your milkman and newspaper shop that you’ll be moving and give them a date you want the service to stop

• If you have children or pets, arrange for someone to look after them during the move

• Make a list of everyone who should know about the move. Send out change of address ecards

• Finalise arrangements with your removal company. Confirm arrival times and make sure your removers have directions to your new address

• Arrange a time to collect the keys for your new home from the estate agent

• Notify then bank of any changes to direct debits and standing orders

Who to notify checklist
If you’re moving house, it’s important to inform the relevant people of your departure. Use our handy checklist to ensure no-one is forgotten.

### Services and utilities

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<td>Electricity</td>
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<td>Post office</td>
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<td>Cable/satellite and internet service providers</td>
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<tr>
<td>TV/video rental companies</td>
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<tr>
<td>TV licensing</td>
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Financial
• Banks
• Building societies
• Credit card companies
• Council tax department
• National savings and premium bonds
• Your employer
• Insurance companies
• Pension companies
• Inland revenue
• Social security
• Solicitor

Health
• Doctor
• Dentist
• Optician

Motoring
• DVLA
• Breakdown recovery company
• Vehicle registration
• Vehicle insurance

Others
• Friends and relatives
• Subscriptions
• Milk delivery
• Newsagent
• Sports club
• Library
• Schools/colleges
Section 12

Reasons for Tamworth Borough Council terminating your tenancy
You must comply with the terms and conditions of your Tenancy Agreement. If you do not, action can be taken against this and you will be asked to leave the scheme.

If the council wishes you to leave your accommodation, you should be given at least four weeks’ notice in writing.

You may be evicted from your accommodation for any of the following reasons:

- You have failed to pay your rent or service charges
- You have broken a condition of your tenancy agreement
- Anti Social Behaviour by you, your visitors, family or friends
- Neglect and damage to your property caused by you, your visitors, family or friends
- If you do not make use or engage with the support that is available to you. Supported Housing is specialist accommodation for people who need support and advice to help them manage their own tenancies successfully.
- When you are ready to move on – If you decline Tamworth Borough Council properties and are ready to move on this may lead to us ending your tenancy with us.
Useful Information

Emergency Contacts
Useful Information Emergency Contacts

**Dental Emergencies** call your own dentist or NHS Direct 08 45 46 47

**Minor Injuries** can be treated at Sir Robert Peel Hospital, Tamworth, open 24 hours per day, 7 days a week

**Mental Health Support & Advice**
free helpline call Saturday & Sunday between 2pm – 2am 0808 800 2234
Outside of these times leave a message & they will call you back

**Emergency Contraception** is available from your GP/chemist & Tamworth Health Clinic, Upper Gungate open on Saturdays 10.15am–12.30pm

**Housing Repairs**
(24 hours) call 0800 183 0044

**Police Emergency** – where life is in danger or a crime in progress call 999
Police Non Emergency call 0300 123 4455

**Hospital Accident & Emergency services** are at Good Hope Hospital, Sutton Coldfield

**NHS Direct** provides 24 hour health advice and information. They can also provide interpreters in many languages.
Call 08 45 46 47

**Tamworth Borough Council**
01827 709709 (out of office hours follow the instructions give)

Need someone to talk to? Text or call your Support Worker.
Fiona: 07528 630057, Louise: 07528 630058 or Trudy: 07528 630059..
Places of Worship

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<tr>
<td>Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (Amington)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Coton Centre</td>
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<td>Elim Church (Glascote)</td>
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<td>Glascote Congregational Church</td>
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<td>Hopwas Methodist Church</td>
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<td>Kingdom Hall</td>
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<td>Kingsbury Methodist Church</td>
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<td>Members Homes</td>
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<td>Mission Hall (Belgrave)</td>
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<td>Sacred Heart</td>
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<td>St Georges Church, Bamford Street</td>
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<td>St John the Baptist</td>
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<td>St Martin's in the Delph</td>
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<td>St Mary's/All Saints, No Mans Heath</td>
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<td>St Michael and St James, Haunton</td>
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<td>St Paul's (Dosthill)</td>
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<td>St Paul's (Fazeley)</td>
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<td>St Peter's (Drayton Bassett)</td>
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<td>Seventh Day Adventist Church</td>
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<td>Tamworth Baptist Church</td>
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<td>Tamworth Christian Fellowship</td>
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<td>Tamworth Salvation Army</td>
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<td>Tamworth Spiritualist Church</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wilnecote Methodist Church</td>
<td>892220</td>
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Information Stonydelph Estate

Church
• St Martin, Ellerbeck, Stonydelph Telephone 897993

Dentist
• 26 Ellerbeck, Stonydelph Telephone 897857

Doctors
• Stonydelph Health Centre, Ellerbeck, Stonydelph Telephone 899919

Buses
• Pennine Way 7 and 780

Nursery
• Ark Nursery, St Martins Centre, Ellerbeck, Stonydelph, Telephone 897993

Play Areas
• Gladiators Park, Rainscar, Stonydelph
• Play Area, Lothersdale, Stonydelph
• MUGA, Crowden Road, Stonydelph

Schools
• The Dales Infant and Junior School, Fossdale Road, Stonydelph, Telephone 896424
• Stonydelph Primary School, Crowden Road, Stonydelph, Telephone 896666

Shops (Local)
• Forbuoys, Ellerbeck
• Hairdressers, Ellerbeck, Stonydelph, Telephone 892303
• Post Office, Within Spa shop, Ellerbeck, Stonydelph,
• Spa, Ellerbeck, Stonydelph
• Stonydelph Fish Bar, Ellerbeck, Stonydelph, Telephone 895002
• Stonydelph Pharmacy, Ellerbeck, Stonydelph
• Thomas Colwin, Betting Shop, Ellerbeck, Stonydelph,
• Watsons Newsagents, 30 Pennymoor Road, Stonydelph, Telephone 898470
## Useful Telephone Numbers

<table>
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<tr>
<td>CAB</td>
<td>709641</td>
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<tr>
<td>Childline</td>
<td>0800 11 11</td>
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<tr>
<td>Emergency</td>
<td>999</td>
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<tr>
<td>NHS Direct</td>
<td>0845 4647</td>
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<tr>
<td>NSPCC 24 hr helpline</td>
<td>0808 800 5000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pathway Project (womens refuge)</td>
<td>01543 676800</td>
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<tr>
<td>Police</td>
<td>0300 123 4455</td>
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<td>Relate</td>
<td>709652</td>
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<td>Samaritans</td>
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<td>Staffs Council Council – early years and childcare</td>
<td>278205</td>
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<tr>
<td>Surestart</td>
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<tr>
<td>Victim Support</td>
<td>0845 303 0900</td>
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<td>Womens Aid</td>
<td>0345 023 468</td>
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### Tamworth Borough Council

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Telephone</th>
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<tr>
<td>Supporting Housing Team</td>
<td>899428</td>
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<tr>
<td>Independent Living Manager</td>
<td>709436</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support Officers</td>
<td>0752 86300</td>
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<td>57/58/59</td>
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<tr>
<td>Estate Management Team</td>
<td>709491</td>
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<td>Income Team</td>
<td>709506</td>
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<td>Housing Advice Team</td>
<td>709489</td>
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<td>Main Council Office</td>
<td>709709</td>
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<td>Housing Benefits</td>
<td>709540</td>
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<tr>
<td>Morrison, 24 hour repairs call centre</td>
<td>0800 183 0044</td>
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<tr>
<td>Service Team</td>
<td>317790</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Alternative formats

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