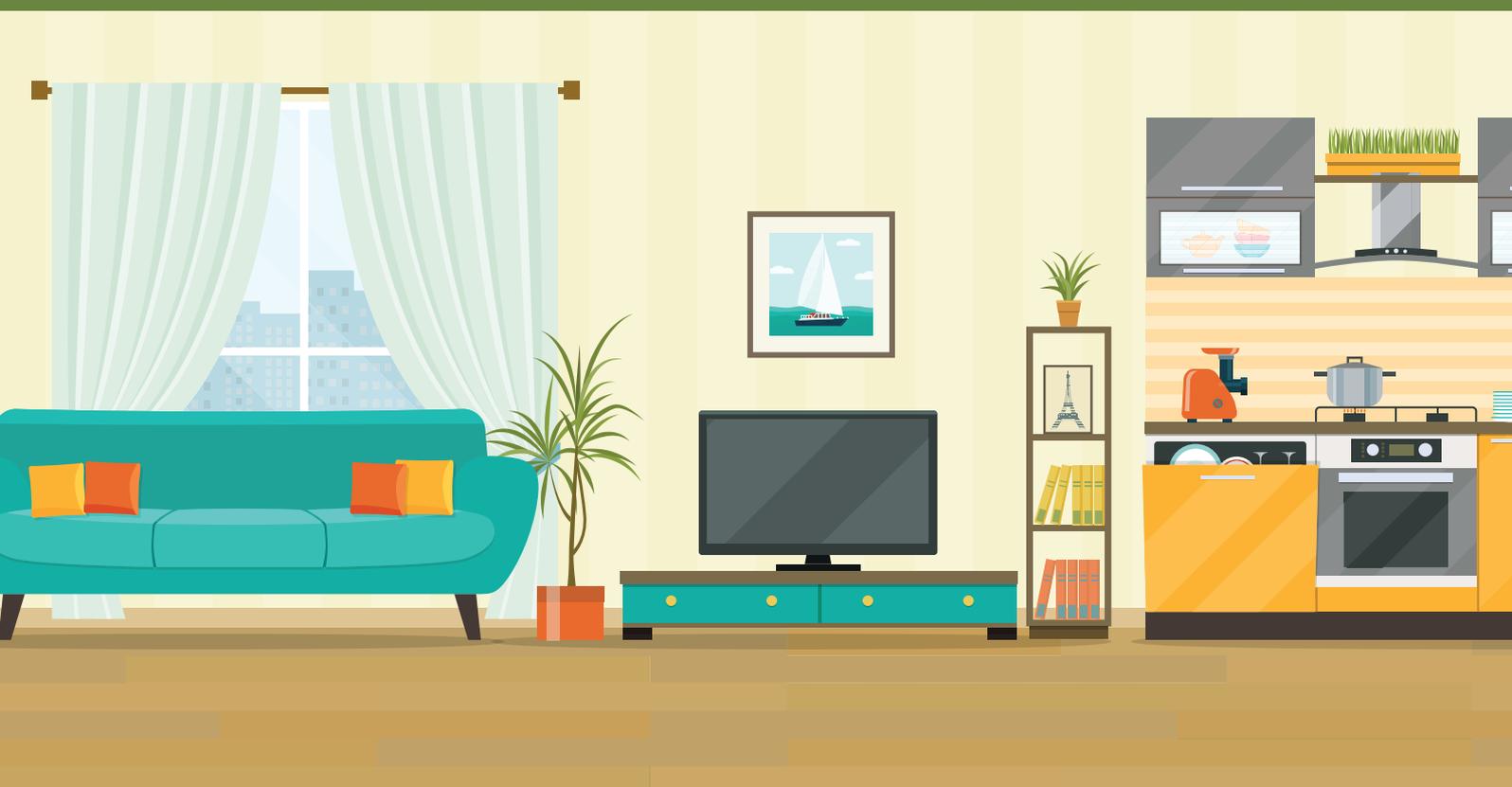


Tamworth Borough Council Neighbourhood Services

Annual Report for Tenants 2022-2023



**TENANT
APPROVED**

Tamworth
Borough Council

1 Welcome to your Annual Report

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Welcome to the 2022-2023 Annual Report for Tenants and Leaseholders. This report shows how we are performing and what we have achieved over the last 12 months.

We continue to send out the Annual Report by email. However, the report is also available to download via the website. As ever, we welcome any feedback you have on the report and its contents, so please do get in touch if you would like to.

If you find yourself interested and would like to get involved or simply require further information please contact the Tenant Regulatory & Involvement Team on 01827 709709 or email tenantparticipation@tamworth.gov.uk

Social Housing Act receives Royal Assent

The Social Housing Regulation Act received Royal Assent on 20 July 2023, officially becoming law. The Act forms a new era of regulation for the social housing sector.

The Social Housing Regulation Act will improve the regulation of social housing, strengthening tenants' rights and ensuring better quality and safer homes for residents. Now that the Act has received Royal Assent, the Regulator of Social Housing will consult on revisions to the consumer standards, as set out below, and the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) will consult on the measures to take forward the government's social housing reform programme.

The regulator has published a consultation seeking input on a set of consumer standards, likely to apply from April 2024. These include:

Current Consumer Standards	Revisions to the Consumer Standards – post 20 July 2023
The home standard	The safety and quality standard
The tenancy standard	The transparency, influence and accountability
The neighbourhood & community standard	The neighbourhood and community standard
The tenant involvement and empowerment standard	The tenancy standard
The rent standard – forms part of the economic	

It should be noted that this will be the last tenants annual performance report published in this current format.



Who we are



Area	Total
Amington	405
Belgrave	294
Bolehall	345
Borough Road	40
Coton Green	63
Dosthill	79
Fazeley	111
Gillway	218
Glascote	564
Hockley	146
Kettlebrook	202
Leyfields	447
Stonydelph	698
The Leys	59
Town Centre	392
Two Gates	21
Wilmecote	203

Total number of properties: 4,287

Type of properties available to tenants Total: 4,287

 <p>1,258</p> <p>FLAT/ MAISONETTE</p> <p>1 bed = 706 2 bed = 532 3 bed = 20</p>	 <p>2,429</p> <p>HOUSE</p> <p>2 bed = 558 3 bed = 1715 4 bed+ = 156</p>	 <p>235</p> <p>BUNGALOW</p> <p>1 bed = 203 2 bed = 32</p>	 <p>365</p> <p>SHELTERED</p> <p>1 bed = 324 2 bed = 38 3 bed = 3</p>
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2 Tamworth Community: A Year in Pictures



Plant a Pot at Ankermoor



Annandale lounge open day



Plant a Pot at Annandale



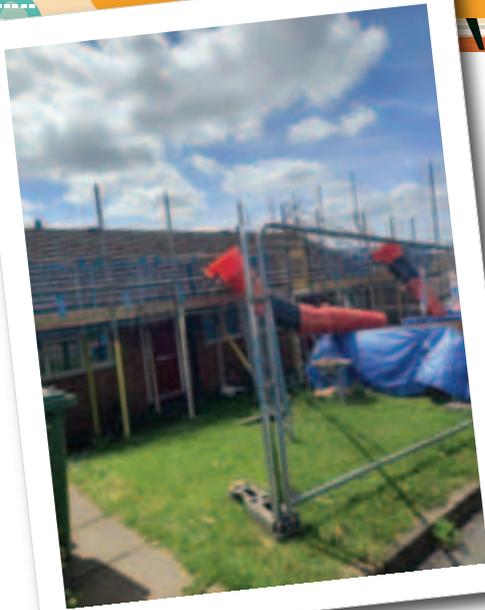
Plant a Pot at Annandale



Annandale ribbon cutting



Wates donate a TV



Roofs at Edward Court (Before)



Roofs at Edward Court (After)



Oakendale communal area



Oakendale communal area



Tenants voice group members



TIQ group members

3 Tenant involvement and empowerment

This section looks at how we communicate and involve our tenants and how well we know and respond to tenants' needs.

THERE ARE VARIOUS WAYS FOR CUSTOMERS TO GET INVOLVED

TENANT VOICE GROUP

MEMBERS REVIEWED ARTICLES, MADE RECOMMENDATIONS, AND PUT TOGETHER THE PAGE PLAN FOR THE OPEN HOUSE QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

ANALYSED

90



SURVEYS FROM CUSTOMERS

2 PLANT A POT

EVENTS HELD AT ANKERMOOR COURT AND ANNERDALE SHELTERED HOUSING SCHEMES

8 TENANT INSPECTORS

ACTIVELY INVOLVED IN COMMUNAL CLEANING & ESTATE INSPECTORS DURING 2022/23

407

TENANTS REGISTERED ON THE DATABASE OF INVOLVEMENT

ANNUAL PROGRAMME OF ESTATE INSPECTIONS **10 COMPLETED** COVERING ALL WARDS ACROSS THE BOROUGH

CONTINUED TO MONITOR ALL CUSTOMER FEEDBACK AND PERFORMANCE TO IMPROVE OVERALL SATISFACTION WITH NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

QUARTERLY REVIEWS OF THE TENANT INVOLVEMENT AND CONSULTATION STRATEGY ACTION PLAN

TENANTS REVIEWED

PROPOSED ENVIRONMENT WORKS AND IMPROVEMENTS ACROSS THE BOROUGH THROUGH THE

NEIGHBOURHOOD INVESTMENT

TENANTS CONSULTED

WITH AND GAVE INPUT ON THE NEW COMMENTS, COMPLAINTS POLICY, THE NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES ANNUAL REPORT AND THE

INCOME MANAGEMENT POLICY

SUCCESSFUL RECRUITMENT CAMPAIGN

THAT LED TO THREE NEW TENANT WORKING GROUP MEMBERS BEING ACTIVELY INVOLVED IN 2022/23





Ways to get involved

There is a variety of ways for you to work with us to improve your Neighbourhood Services. The options are designed to suit varied needs and lifestyles – whether you can spare only 10 minutes a month or attend regular meetings – there is something here for everyone.

● Tenant Consultative Group

These meetings take place every two months and give tenants and leaseholders from across the borough the chance to discuss and agree decisions on a range of issues that affect all tenants including policy, practices and finance matters.

● Tenant Involvement Group

This group meets every three months and closely monitors customer feedback and performance across Neighbourhood Services and makes suggestions for service improvements.

● Complaints Review Panel

This panel meets every three months with Neighbourhood Officers and looks at the different kinds of complaints that are being received and what customers are really telling us.

● Surveys & Questionnaires

Tenants are either randomly selected or democratically targeted to offer their views and opinions on key services, either telephone, post or email.

● Tenants Voice

This is an Editorial Panel who meet regularly to review Neighbourhood Services publications, newsletters and leaflets to ensure the content and design is clear, user friendly and meaningful.

● Seniors United

This is a forum for sheltered housing tenants to get together, share ideas and experiences and discuss issues relevant to their needs.

● Tenant Inspectors

Tenant Inspectors are provided with the opportunity to inspect communal cleaning services being delivered across Tamworth estates and can call managers to account if services do not meet the required standards.



Get involved leaflet

by

Launching soon – Keep a watch out for further information.

● **Anti-Social Behaviour Scrutiny Group**

Customers from a different range of tenures meet to monitor performance, discuss issues of concern and contribute to service delivery.

● **Repairs Working Group & High Rise Tenants Group**

By getting involved, you can tell us what matters most to you so we can better tackle your concerns and develop services to meet your needs.

If you are interested in taking part in any of the wide range of activities, panels and groups managed by the council's tenant involvement team, visit: www.tamworth.gov.uk/tenant-involvement, email: TenantParticipation@tamworth.gov.uk or call 01827 709709 for more information.

Customer feedback

Complaints, compliments and service requests

As a council, we want to offer a service that is right first time – every time. Occasionally though we accept that things do not go as we planned.

We value all feedback and encourage tenants to tell us about their experience, good or bad, and/or suggest ways to improve our service delivery.

A total of **279** complaints, compliments and service requests were received within Neighbourhood Services during 2022/2023. **32%** were classified as complaints, **60%** service requests and **8%** compliments.





	2020/2021	2021/2022	2022/2023
Complaints	238	242	88
Compliments	32	33	21
Service requests	202	48	170
Total	472	323	279

	2020/2021	2021/2022	2022/23
Number of stage 1 complaints	223	213	81
Number of stage 2 complaints	15	29	7
Number of compliments	32	33	21

Across the total number of **88 complaints**:

- **43** relate to repairs contractors **Wates & Equans** (including Equans Gas)
- **16** relate to **Housing Solutions**
- **9** relate to **Tenancy/Anti-social behaviour issues**
- **11** relate to **planned maintenance or repairs**
- **9** relate to **'other'**

Across the total number of **21 compliments**:

- **2** relate to repairs contractors **Wates & Equans** (including Equans Gas)
- **10** relate to **Housing Solutions**
- **5** relate to **Tenancy/Anti-social behaviour issues**
- **4** relate to **other housing services**

In summary, **88** complaints were received within Neighbourhood Services during 2022/2023. This was a very small proportion in relation to **4287** household tenancies.

How to report a problem and who to contact with comments, compliments or complaints about council services.

The council provides a wide range of services for people who live and work in Tamworth and for visitors to the town. Your feedback is very important to us, it helps us to improve the services we provide to better meet the needs of our customers. As part of this, we encourage feedback when we have done something well, or when you think we have done something wrong.

Comments and suggestions

We listen and learn from suggestions as well as compliments and complaints. Comments about how we can alter or improve can lead to a change in process, policy, actions, activity, or literature and material. We think we're doing things right, so unless you tell us we may carry on doing the same. What you tell us can really make a difference, we can't change everything, but what we can - we will. Please see our website for details on how to make a comment or suggestion: <https://www.tamworth.gov.uk/comments-compliments-complaints>.

Compliments

We aim to provide you with an excellent service. If you have any compliments you wish to make, please use our compliment e-form available on our website at www.tamworth.gov.uk/do-it-online. For example your compliment could be about our services, about customer care, about recent events organised by the Council, about the Tamworth environment or about Council staff.

If you can not access the e-form you can pass your compliment on via:

- Telephone 01827 709709.
- Email tellus@tamworth.gov.uk
- Write to us at Marmion House, Lichfield Street, Tamworth, Staffordshire, B79 7BZ.
- Ask any member of staff to assist.

Report It

Many queries can be dealt with without going through the complaints procedure. Before making a complaint, have you contacted the service in question to resolve your issue?

If you're contacting us about an issue for the first time, or you are looking for an update to an ongoing enquiry, please get in touch with the service directly so that we can put things right.

You can see what you can report online via www.tamworth.gov.uk/do-it-online



Complaints

What happens when I make a complaint?

Stage 1 - We try to resolve issues quickly and will try to resolve things informally whenever possible. When we receive your complaint we will acknowledge this within five working days.

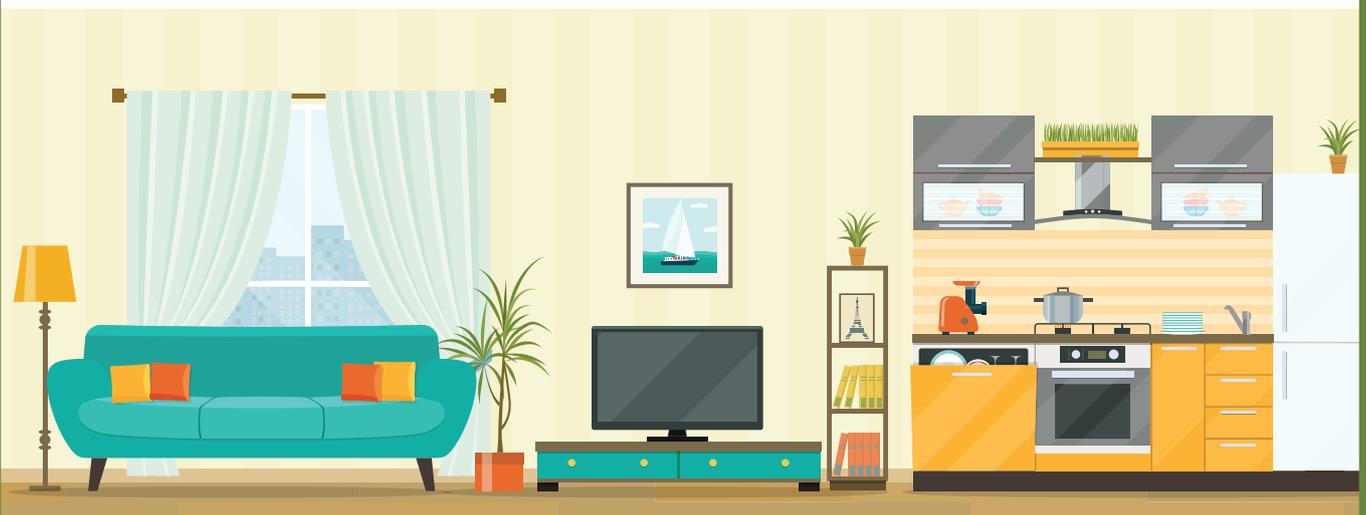
Your complaint will be directed to the manager responsible for the service you're complaining about, and we aim to provide a full response to your complaint within 10 working days.

If we need more information from you, they we'll contact you to get a clearer understanding of your concerns. We will provide a full response and explain any changes which may result from your complaint. We will also tell you how to take the matter further if you're not happy with our response.

Stage 2 - If you're unhappy after you've received the full response at stage one, please tell us straight away or within one month.

We'll acknowledge this within five working days and the complaint will be directed to someone senior to the officer who responded at stage one. We aim to provide a full response to your complaint within 20 working days.

If you still remain dissatisfied with our response, you can then complain to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman or the Housing Ombudsman.



Housing Complaints ONLY

You can contact the Housing Ombudsman Service via www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk at any point during the complaint process. It cannot investigate your complaint whilst your complaint is going through our internal complaints procedure however the Ombudsman may be able to help you and your landlord reach a resolution.

Further detailed information is available in our comments, compliments and complaints policy. This policy can be accessed via www.tamworth.gov.uk/comments-compliments-complaints

Housing Landlord Complaints

The Housing Ombudsman introduced a complaint handling code in July 2020, setting out good practice that will allow landlords to respond to complaints effectively and fairly. Following a review one year after it was introduced, which demonstrated overwhelming support for the code, the Housing Ombudsman have updated it to strengthen provisions to support a positive complaint handling culture.

What does this mean for you?

The council has reviewed its complaints policy and procedures and where areas of improvement have been recognised, or where current areas can be strengthened, these are being acted upon. The new guidance includes an annual self-assessment against the code to ensure complaint handling remains in line with its requirements and the results are published.



4 Home

This section looks at how we provide homes that are safe, of good quality and well maintained.

	2020/2021	2021/2022	2022/23
Percentage of repairs completed on first visit	85%	95%	87%
Customer satisfaction for responsive repairs	94%	97%	88%
Percentage of appointments made and kept	87%	97%	95%

THE NUMBERS...



119
ROOFING JOBS

13,566
RESPONSIVE REPAIRS



225
VOID PROPERTIES

£1,725,842
TOTAL COST TO CARRY OUT
RESPONSIVE REPAIRS

21.96
CALENDAR DAYS TO COMPLETE A REPAIR



87%
REPAIRS COMPLETED AT FIRST VISIT

£4,466.89
AVERAGE SPEND ON
EMPTY PROPERTY

	Number completed	Access
Percentage of repairs completed on first visit	3646	99.93%
Service of house electrics	438	73.38%

We have a responsibility to make sure our properties are fit and safe for our tenants, this includes wiring, fuse board and sockets within properties. It is good practice to inspect these once every five years.

If we notice your smoke alarm is not working we can replace this for you.

If you have any concerns regarding your smoke alarms, gas appliance or electrics please contact our repair team on 0800 183 0044.

We will write to you to arrange access to inspect your property for smoke alarms, periodic electric checks and gas servicing. Please make sure you give us access and are compliant with your tenancy agreement. The use of enforcement to gain entry is last resort, but will be used if essential. Please help us to help keep you and your families safe.

Planned maintenance

In 2022/2023, we spent approximately **£3,371,033.91** on planned home improvements.

IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME	HOW MANY	TOTAL SPEND
Kitchens	116	£696,982
Bathrooms	128	£741,500
Roofing	119	£1,428,000
Windows and doors	100	£397,003
Sheltered Housing Capital works - communal areas	4	£107,547

Tenant Disabled Adaptation – 74 Completed

We are pleased to share the completed jobs undertaken by our disabled adaptations team in 2022-23.

As part of our unwavering commitment to creating accessible and inclusive living spaces, these projects stand as tangible examples of our dedication to improving the quality of life for people with disabilities.

Disabled adaptation work involves modifying living spaces to make them more accessible and functional for people with disabilities. This involves a specialist design process which aims to create environments that empower people with mobility, sensory, or cognitive impairments to navigate, use, and enjoy their home with greater ease and independence.

Adaptations can range from simple adjustments, like installing grab bars and ramps, to more complex modifications such as widening doorways, lowering countertops, and redesigning bathroom layouts to accommodate wheelchairs.

This work is crucial in enhancing the quality of life for people with disabilities by granting them the ability to fully participate in daily activities.

In 2022-23 we assessed 59 cases and completed 74 projects overall across Tamworth.

PROJECT TYPES COMPLETED	COMPLETED
Bathrooms	28
Stairlifts	16
Ramps	15
Adapted kitchens	3
Door Widening	2
Wash dry toilet facilities	1
Minor works	9
Total individual works	74



Soil and ventilation pipe successfully replaced in all six Riverside High Rise blocks of flats

Tamworth Borough Council in partnership with housing contractor Wates, have successfully completed a significant improvement programme to replace soil and ventilation pipes in the six town centre high rise blocks.

The £1.75 million investment for the programme replaced the original cast iron soil and ventilation pipes that had been in place since the original build back in the 1960s. The pipe work was rotten in places and had reached the stage where they need replacing to avoid constant repairs and blockages.

The project itself has been one of Tamworth Borough Council's most ambitious projects to date to avoid the possibility of a total failure of the system, meaning all flats being unable to flush anything out of the building causing waste backups and potential local sewage flooding.

More than 350 properties were affected and access to all was essential to the project success.

Tamworth Borough Council and Wates held drop-in sessions for all residents of the high rise blocks so that people knew what to expect when the works were happening and what facilities they can use as necessary.

Wates also visited everyone in each block before the works started, to make sure residents were aware of the impact of the work and what processes will be in place to help the project successfully complete within the 12-month timescale.

A resident liaison office was set up and the High Rise Social Club was made available as a daily drop in centre for residents, providing refreshments as well as support from the Tamworth Borough Council and Wates staff. Residents also receive regular updates of the progress of the works.

“Very happy with the work done, the lads were really friendly and very helpful” *Townshend Tenant*

“Excellent work, we’re over the moon. We can’t thank Tamworth Borough Council and the workmen enough. The workmen working on the soil and ventilation pipe were so polite, they did a great job and left the flat as they found it.” *Harcourt Tenant*

Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund

Earlier this year we were informed that our bid for funding through the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund had been successful. The funding of just over £1m combined with around £2m of our own funding will allow us to improve the insulation in 89 homes in the Tamworth. The project involves bringing the insulation levels up to the standard of a modern home. This project is part of the overall commitment to achieving net carbon zero, it will help to reduce the amount of fuel used for heating and supports fuel security for the future. This work will also be a good foundation to future projects of a similar nature and having well insulated buildings will make it easier to change to alternative forms of heating in the years to come.

New build

Following on from the success of previous council house building projects we will soon start work on two further new build projects.

We have approval to build five new houses on a site in the Glascote area. We are also working with Cornerstone/Capstone to refurbish a disused building which will become a number of new flats. On the same site there will be some new-build houses and flats. It is likely that these new properties will be completed in 2023.



5 Tenancy

In this section we talk about how well we let our homes, how we can help you maintain your tenancy and how satisfied you are with our overall service.

Number of active housing applicants on the housing waiting list by band of property on the 31 March 2023 was 401

Band 1	60	
Band 2	173	
Band 3	122	
Band 4	46	

Following a successful visit from the Department of Levelling Up, Housing And Communities in October 2022 Housing Solutions remains a best practice authority given its approach to prevention being at the forefront of what we do for homeless households and has a “robust prevention toolkit”.

OPTIONAL WELFARE BENEFIT CHECKS

CUSTOMERS ARE GIVEN AN OPTIONAL WELFARE BENEFIT CHECK AT THE START OF THEIR TENANCY WHICH ALSO INCLUDES REFERRALS TO SUPPORT AGENCIES

AVERAGE TIME BETWEEN LETTINGS

52 DAYS ON AVERAGE TO LET PROPERTIES



TOTAL NUMBER OF PROPERTIES FOR RE-LETTING

225 BECAME AVAILABLE;
18 VOIDS PER MONTH APPROXIMATELY
29 REFUSED (2022/23)

COUNCIL RECEIVED 33 MUTUAL EXCHANGE APPLICATIONS

WHICH **22** WERE ACCEPTED AND **11** WERE REFUSED OR WITHDRAWN

ROUGH SLEEPERS

REMAIN CONSISTENTLY LOW AND THERE ARE NO ENTRENCHED ROUGH SLEEPERS IN TAMWORTH

EARLY INTERVENTION HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION

PREVENTED **149** HOUSEHOLDS BECOMING HOMELESS

AVERAGE STAY OF BED & BREAKFAST 24 NIGHTS

THIS WAS WITHIN THE **42** NIGHT LIMIT SET OUT BY GOVERNMENT LEGISLATION

28 HOUSEHOLDS IN TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION

ON 31 MARCH 2023
4 IN BED & BREAKFAST
24 IN COUNCIL OWNED TEMPORARY UNITS

6 HOUSEHOLDS BENEFITED FROM INCENTIVE TO MOVE PROGRAMME,

DESIGNED TO RELEASE LARGER FAMILY ACCOMMODATION

Temporary Accommodation Co-ordinator

The council now has 25 units of self-contained temporary accommodation of 1 – 3 bedroom properties across the borough.

White goods are provided, and many are fitted with carpets and some furnishings. These properties are managed by our Temporary Accommodation Co-ordinator, who also supports those who are homeless to have a successful transition when they are re-housed into alternative, secure accommodation.

Our Temporary Accommodation Co-ordinator provides vital services to tenants; liaising with multiple agencies and with internal departments to make sure all support needs are met, and their application progresses in line with required timescales.

Due to the hands on approach and extra support provided to those in self-contained temporary accommodation, we have seen a decrease the void costs of temporary accommodation units.

Streamlined housing application process

We've made the process for managing housing register applications easier for customers and is quicker for staff to administer.

The new approach also provides an enhanced service to customers as they have a single point of contact for their applications and receive a faster service meaning they can begin their search for a new home much quicker.

Successful Partnership Projects

- We worked in collaboration with Heart of Tamworth to deliver a winter relief programme as part of our severe weather emergency protocol. We supported 23 individuals through this programme. The winter relief programme was operational between 1 December 2022 – 30 March 2023 and provided wrap around support to clients homeless or at imminent risk of homeless and most vulnerable.
- We have worked in conjunction with Tamworth Advice Centre and Heart of Tamworth for Tamworth Advice Centre to provide a financial advice drop in surgery every week. Its aim is to support those at risk of homelessness or those struggling with the cost of living crisis. Since September 2022 this surgery runs every Monday at Sacred Heart and it has delivered some significant financial gains for Tamworth residents.



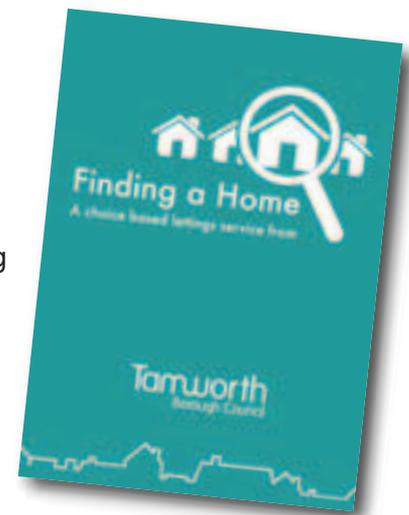
Homeless Services

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

We offer help, guidance and advice such as:

- Help to claim 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 people motivated and involved in decision making
- Contact other services/agencies on behalf of the tenant

We are currently working in partnership with Equans to help educate residents on practical DIY solutions which will not only reduce demand on the repairs service but enable residents to be more independent when they move on.



100%
OF LETTINGS
TURNED AROUND
WITH 10 DAYS
FROM TENANCY
END DATE

100%
OF SUPPORT
PLANS AGREED
WITHIN 4 WEEKS

100%
OF SUCCESSFUL
MOVE-ON

Looking forward to 2023-24

- A new digital questionnaire has been developed which will be sent to tenants six weeks after they have left the scheme so we can gather valuable feedback and continue to improve the service. The digital questionnaire is a first for housing solutions and we hope to expand this to other service areas.
- We are in the process of reviewing our licence agreements, tenants handbook and working with partners to deliver practical self help sessions to residents, which will begin with St John's ambulance providing a session in September 2023 covering adult and child first aid.
- We are also in discussions with Equans to consider upgrading the current electric storage heaters within the scheme for more energy efficient heaters.

Sheltered Housing

Sheltered housing provides people aged 55 and over with another housing choice in Tamworth.

It enables tenants to continue to live independently and combats isolation by creating a sense of community within each sheltered scheme. Communal spaces in each scheme give residents the opportunity to organise events and activities together as well as coffee mornings and monthly tenant meetings organised by scheme managers.

100%
OF MONITORING
SHEETS
COMPLETED IN
RELATION TO
LEGIONELLA

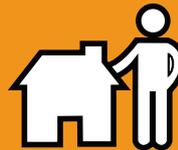


100%
OF NEEDS
ASSESSMENTS
CARRIED OUT AT ALL
SHELTERED SCHEMES FOR
POTENTIAL APPLICANTS
76 WHERE COMPLETED

**ANNUAL
HEALTH
& SAFETY
INSPECTION
PROGRAM**
COMPLETED ACROSS
ALL PROPERTIES

**LIFELINE PULL CORDS
ANSWERED
24/7**
OUTSIDE OF OFFICE HOURS
ELDERCARE ANSWERED
11,662 ALARM CALLS.
95% ALARM CALLS
ANSWERED WITHIN 60 SECONDS

100%
OF NEW TENANTS
VISITED WITHIN **24HRS**
OF MOVING IN



100%
OF NEW TENANTS
COMPLETE TENANCY
MANAGEMENT PLANS WITH
THEIR SCHEME MANAGER
WITHIN **4** WEEKS
OF MOVING IN

100%
OF SCHEME
RESIDENT
MEETINGS HELD
EVERY OTHER
MONTH

**SUITE OF NEW
HEALTH
& SAFETY
LITERATURE
PRODUCED**

**PRODUCED
SHELTERED
HOUSING
WINTER PLAN 2022**
AIMING TO REDUCE SPREAD
OF WINTER VIRUSES



Capital works in sheltered housing

Annandale Lounge Refurbishment

As part of our capital works investment programme the Annandale Communal Lounge was re-decorated and new flooring fitted making the space fresh, warm and welcoming for residents. Our partners, Wates, donated a new TV to Annandale residents lounge for the whole scheme to enjoy. Residents were so thrilled with the works done in the lounge they organised a ribbon cutting ceremony to re-open the lounge after the works were completed.



Ian Shirt from Wates attended the official opening of the lounge



Annandale Residents organise an official opening on newly refurbished lounge

Edward Court's New Roofing

To maintain the standard of our housing stock and ensure their longevity our capital works programme included new roofing for the properties in Edward Court. These new roofs will also improve the insulation of these properties making them easier to heat keeping them warmer for longer which will in turn make these homes more cost effective for our tenants.



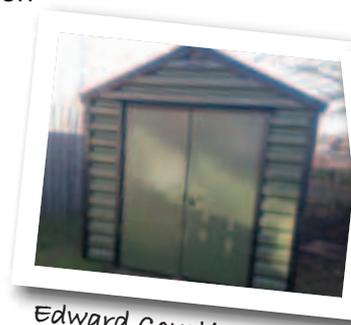
Roofs at Edward Court (Before)



Roofs at Edward Court (After)

Neighbourhood Investment Project (NIP)

Sheltered Housing successfully applied for 2 investments from the NIP. Additional street signs were installed around Magnolia to help reduce confusion finding some of the scheme properties as the road is unconventionally split in two different directions. Edward Court successfully applied for a new secure garden shed for the residents to safely store communal equipment in.



Edward Court's new shed



Edward Court's new signage

6 Rent

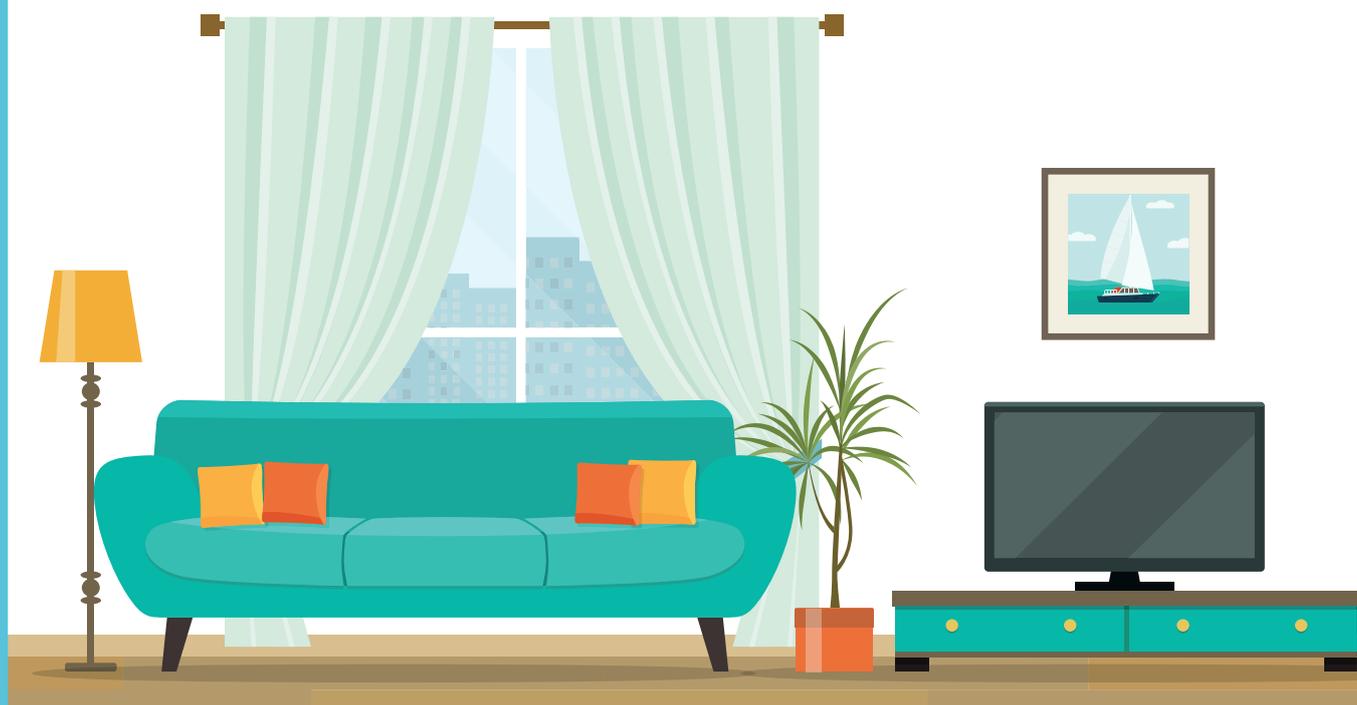
In section we will show you how we keep rent at an affordable amount for our tenants and work with tenants to help them maintain their tenancy.

Tamworth Borough Council operates a 48 week rent year to give tenants four weeks rent free.

Next year's rent free weeks will be, week commencing:

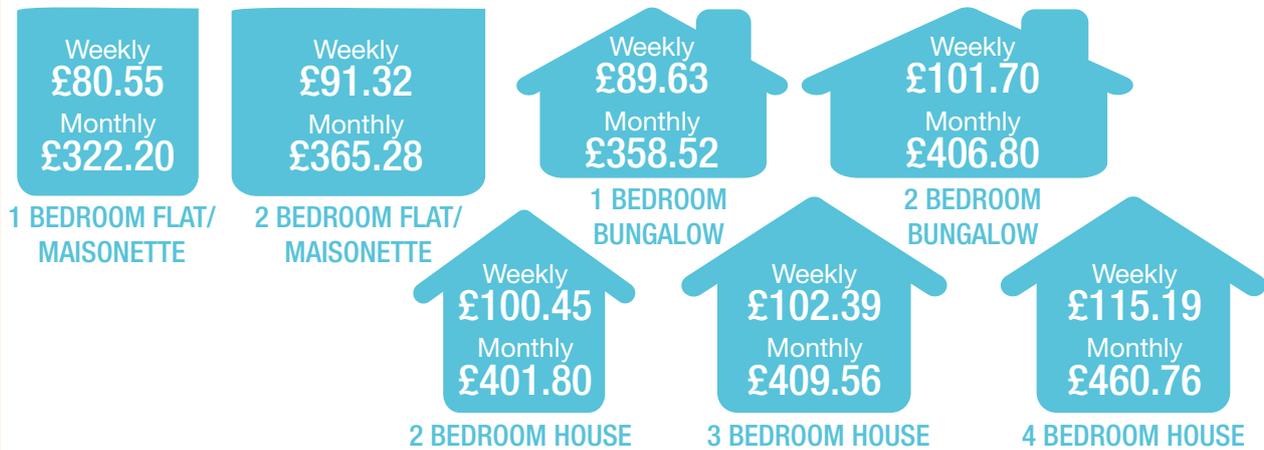
- 21 August 2023
- 18 March 2024
- 18 December 2023
- 25 March 2024

	AS AT 31 MARCH 2021	AS AT 31 MARCH 2022	AS AT 31 MARCH 2023
Number of council tenants on universal credit	1449	1617	1722
Number of council tenants on universal credit in rent arrears	680	749	779
Percentage of council tenants on universal credit in rent arrears	47%	46%	45%
Number of council tenants on universal credit not in rent arrears	769	868	943
Percentage of council tenants on universal credit not in rent arrears	53%	55%	55%





Average rent (excluding service charges)



Social housing rent cap

A consultation was launched, August 2022, inviting the views from social housing tenants and landlords on a proposed rent cap to understand how best to support households with the cost of living. In the autumn budget statement November 2022 the government announced a cap on this increase of 7% for 2023/24 as part of their response to the cost-of-living crisis.

Problems paying rent? Act now!

There are many ways we can help you sort any financial problems that you may be facing and we remain committed to doing everything we can to support you.

You can contact us via phone or email. So please call us now on 01827 709514 or email us at: IncomeTeam@tamworth.gov.uk

You may be entitled to claim benefits including Universal Credit, which may help with covering the cost of part or all your rent. Tamworth Borough Council's Opening Times: Monday to Thursday 8.45am - 5.10pm Friday 8.45am - 5.05pm (closed bank holidays).

How we can help you:

- Work with you to agree an affordable repayment plan
- Offer help and advice on maximising and managing your income at the start and during your tenancy
- Advise you on your entitlement to welfare benefits including help towards your housing costs and council tax
- Help with discretionary housing payment applications (this is not a benefit, it is a discretionary payment and is paid to the rent account. You must be in receipt of housing benefit or universal credit housing costs to apply)
- Refer you for food bank vouchers, if you are struggling to afford to buy groceries

- Refer you for independent specialist advice to help you put together a budgeting plan and give you debt management advice and solutions
- Refer you for advice on reducing fuel bills and energy saving tips.

We will discuss issues sympathetically and confidentially with you.

<p>EVICTIONS</p> <p>THE NUMBER OF EVICTIONS CARRIED OUT FOR 2022/2023 WAS 9</p> <p>EVICTION IS ALWAYS THE LAST RESORT</p>	<p>NOTICES</p> <p>OF SEEKING POSSESSION ISSUED FOR RENT ARREARS IN 2022/2023 WAS 692</p> <p>COMPARED TO 397 IN 2021/2022</p>	<p>QUARTERLY</p> <p>RENT INCENTIVE DRAW</p> <p>CONTINUES WITH A PRIZE OF £250 TO ENCOURAGE TENANTS TO KEEP A CLEAR RENT ACCOUNT</p>
<p>RENT COLLECTED</p> <p>RENT COLLECTED AS A % OF ANNUAL DEBIT WAS 101.44%</p> <p>FOR 2021/2022 AND 101.50% FOR 2022/2023</p>	<p>HOUSING QUALITY NETWORK REVIEW</p> <p>OF TAMWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL'S RENT AGAINST GOVERNMENT RENT POLICY.</p> <p>WE CONTINUE TO WORK THROUGH THE ACCREDITATION ACTION PLAN</p>	<p>EARLY INTERVENTION</p> <p>EMPHASIS CONTINUES TO BE PLACED ON EARLY INTERVENTION. EVEN THOUGH THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE BEHIND WITH THEIR RENT IS LOW, WE CONTINUE TO WORK TO PREVENT THE PROBLEM FOR PEOPLE</p>

Housing Income Recovery

Housing rent arrears collection remains in the upper quartile when compared with other social housing providers across the West Midlands. We've supported residents to sustain their tenancies and prevent homelessness while also reducing the amount of outstanding rent owed.

The council continues to deliver on its Housing Quality Network (HQN) rent accreditation improvement plan, which provides reassurance that good quality rent collection services continued to be delivered.



Hardship Fund

The hardship fund has continued to be utilised specifically to support tenants with the cost of living crisis through 2022/23. The purpose of the scheme is:

- To help alleviate poverty and stress
- To reduce the temptation for tenants to use illegal money lenders
- To sustain tenancies

As at 31 March 2023

TOTAL NUMBER OF HR APPLICATIONS	APPS APPROVED	APPS REFUSED	APPS CANCELLED
47	26	15	3
Annual Hardship Fund Budget: £20,000			
Monies spent following a review of the Hardship Fund Policy since 2020: £12,008			
Hardship Fund Budget available as at 31.03.2023: £7,992			

HARDSHIP FUND PAYMENT REQUESTS

Reduced hours, job loss, 0 contract hours

White good appliances purchased

Other essential costs i.e. basic flooring due to an unplanned move etc.

Hardship fund applications that have been refused have not fit the hardship fund criteria, have failed to provide the appropriate documentary evidence or following assessment have been considered to have surplus available monies.

COST OF LIVING CRISIS

Staff were given energy awareness training so we are able to support customers with the cost of living crisis. The energy advice training was beneficial and we've been able to confidently pass on their knowledge and advice to customers.

The council was given **discretionary government grant funding** (a one-off payment of £150) for Tamworth residents (including tenants) who were vulnerable and struggling with cost of living, up until 30 November 2022. The grant was a one-off payment of £150 paid directly into the resident's bank account and did not need to be paid back to the council. We made a larger number of discretionary grant applications for tenants struggling.

Information was added to Tamworth Borough Council's website about the **Money Navigator Tool** for anyone who wanted to seek free help and advice with their finances. The online money navigator tool website provides up to date guidance based upon individual circumstances and there is information available on:

- what issues individuals need to deal with first
- ways of staying on top of bills
- how to find extra support
- where to get extra help

The link was added to the website for customers to access www.moneyhelper.org.uk/en/money-troubles/coronavirus/money-navigator-tool

The Paying Your Rent Winter leaflet was included within the winter edition of Open House December 2022, the tenant's quarterly newsletter. This gave useful information on ways to pay your rent, contact details for help and advice if someone is struggling to pay their rent, managing debt, universal credit information, information and contact details for Citizens Advice Mid Mercia and lots of other useful information and contacts.

Help for Households Campaign – energy saving advice was also added to the website and included in Open House. In October 2022, the government published energy saving advice as part of the Help for Households Campaign. Advice given was for:

- Reducing boiler flow temperature
- Turning down radiators not in use
- Draft proofing windows and doors
- The help for Households website: <https://helpforhouseholds.campaign.gov.uk/>

Energy saving advice: <https://helpforhouseholds.campaign.gov.uk/help-with-your-bills/energy-saving-advice/>

A 'help with energy costs' leaflet was produced and uploaded on the website and a strap line was included on the rent statements directing tenants to useful information. This was also included in the December edition of Open House alongside the targeted paying your rent winter campaign.

Our teams made referrals to Staffordshire County Council's Winter warmth project referral for £450. The Winter Warmth scheme offered some limited funding to households suffering from extreme concerns around fuel.



We also made referrals to Staffordshire County Council's Household Support Scheme e-vouchers - £65 per household plus £20 per child. The Department for Work and Pensions announced a further extension to the Household Support Fund, which ran from 1 October 2022 to 31 March 2023.

Assure tariff – This is a special tariff that can assist some customers on low income pay their water bill. If someone is eligible and their application successful, their charges will be discounted for two years, in the first year by 60% and the second year by 40%. Assure is available for residential customers who meet certain eligibility criteria.

EARLY INTERVENTION

Early Intervention, the foundation for effective income management, begins from the first point of contact with a new tenant.

Below are some of the effective early intervention methods that have and continue to be used

- Information about the importance of paying rent is shared at viewings and tenancy sign ups.
- All tenants, new and existing, are informed about who to contact about rent payment and where to get help if they get behind with rent and other bills.
- Visits arranged as necessary for new tenants - We work proactively with tenants to help them with complying with their tenancy terms and conditions. Signposting to support and advice and making sure rent is being paid. We also help to resolve any Housing Benefit queries or Universal Credit claims.
- We comply with the provisions of the Pre-Action Protocol for Rent Arrears
- Make realistic repayment arrangements with tenants to accommodate changes in circumstances.
- A wide choice of payment methods are offered to customers and all are explained clearly.
- We actively offer to help and support customers in claiming benefits and make referrals to Citizens Advice Mid Mercia and the Job Centre.
- Our website has benefit check and budgeting links.
- Direct referrals can be made to Citizens Advice Mid Mercia for multiple debt problems and money management.
- Information and support details are included as standard on all quarterly rent statements and on Tamworth Borough Council website.
- The rent leaflet includes a wealth of information for debt and money management advice in addition to other support and assistance inclusive of home energy, counselling service and the Samaritans.

MY HOUSING

Tamworth Borough Council housing tenants can manage aspects of their tenancy online, in real-time, through the MyHousing website.



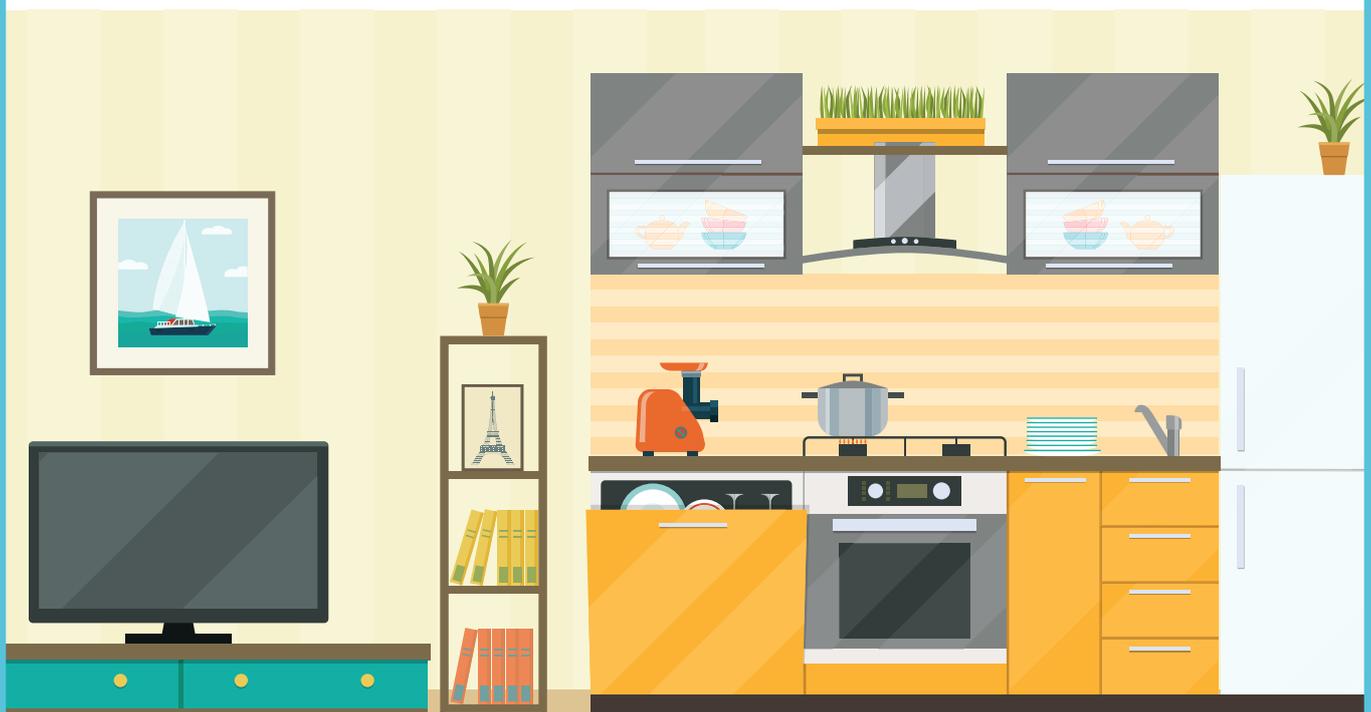
Functions of MyHousing include:

- Live access to rent account balances and transactions, including being able to make online payments, set up direct debits and print statements.
- Update personal details, including who's living in a property.
- Check the status of any ongoing repairs, as well as planned works to your home or communal building.
- View a repairs history.
- Report anti-social behaviour.
- Send direct messages to members of the housing team.

Get started now by going to <https://myhousing.tamworth.gov.uk/>

Tenants can choose to play a quick demo to see how the website works upon registering.

If you need help to register, and do not have a friend or family member who can assist you, please call our us on 01827 709709, webchat, or email enquiries@tamworth.gov.uk.





UNIVERSAL CREDIT

Many of our tenants are now receiving regular monthly payments of universal credit and we can advise you on how to apply. We can help you by setting up an alternative payment arrangement where universal credit is paid direct to your rent account, to pay the standard weeks rent, plus an additional sum towards any arrears if this applies. Many customers have found this to be the easiest way to pay their rent and or any debt if behind with paying.



Anyone seeking help or advice about universal credit can contact their helpline on 0800 328 5644, which is a free call, Monday to Friday, 8.00am to 6pm.

Alternatively queries can be directed to the Citizens Advice Mid Mercia helpline

Tel: 0300 330 9002, open Monday to Friday 10am to 4.00pm.

HOME CONTENTS INSURANCE

Tamworth Borough Council has negotiated a home contents insurance scheme for its tenants and leaseholders.

The prices are competitive and contents insurance is worth considering. It is important to protect your personal contents in your property against loss or damage caused by fire, flood and burglary. The council's own insurance policy only covers the building not your personal contents. Further information is available at: <http://www.tamworth.gov.uk/contents-insurance>



TAMWORTH ADVICE CENTRE (TAC) HELP WITH BENEFITS AND DEBT ADVICE

The Tamworth Advice Centre can:

Check you are getting all the benefits you are entitled to and help you apply for them. Assist you in setting up your own bank account.

Help you deal with debts and to learn to budget within your means.

Assist with employment issues and with specialist debt advice such as bankruptcy, debt relief orders, breathing space applications and if you are being taken to court.

There are various ways to contact the TAC:

- Online: Quick instant online self referral form. We will then arrange for an advisor to call you.
- Phone: For advice and booking appointments - (Free phone) 0808 2787972 10.00am to 4.00pm Monday to Friday (quoting you live in Tamworth)
- Email: tamworthadvice@citizensadvicemidmercia.org.uk
- Website: www.citizensadvice.org.uk/local/mid-mercia
- Your Tenancy Sustainment Officer can also refer you to the TAC. You can contact them on: 01827 709514.

7 Neighbourhood and community

In this section we talk about how we work with tenants and our partners to keep neighbourhoods and communal areas greener, cleaner and safer, preventing and tackling incidents of anti-social behaviour and supporting tenants who experience this where they live.

Estate Inspection Programme

We are committed to inspecting our housing areas on a regular basis.

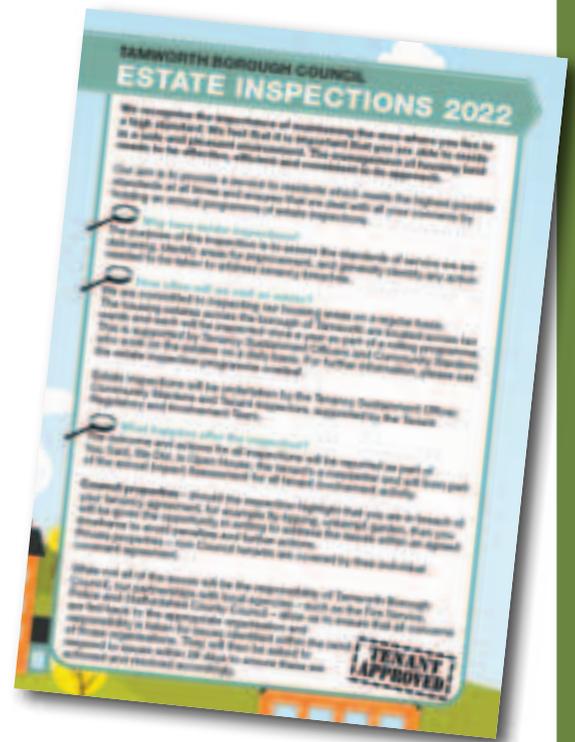
We carry out estate inspections to assess the standards of service we are delivering, identify areas for improvement and generally identify any action needed to be taken to address tenancy breaches.

The estate inspection team will aim to identify issues such as;

- Vandalism
- Abandoned vehicles and illegally parked vehicles
- Graffiti
- Litter and fly-tipping
- Dog fouling
- Problems with road maintenance and streetlights
- Health and safety issues
- Neglected homes and gardens, tenancy issues
- Hot spots for anti-social behaviour
- The condition of fences, walls and pavements
- The condition of trees, grass, shrubs in communal areas

Estate inspections will:

- Ensure cleaner, more attractive and safer neighbourhoods
- Improve estates through quick responses to residents' concerns and by identifying potential improvements
- Clear communal areas of fly-tipping/graffiti and rubbish
- Identify overgrown gardens/shrubbery
- Identify broken streetlights, benches and bins and arrange for repairs
- Ensure agencies take responsibility for issues identified within their remit
- Identify potholes and surface perishing to hard surfaces and uneven and broken paving.





CCTV

Our CCTV service is operated through a partnership with West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA).



Control room

ADDITIONAL
CCTV
CLIENT VIEW
FACILITY INSTALLED

ADDITIONAL
CAMERAS
ADDED TO LIFT OF
ERINGDEN HIGH RISE
WITH THE AIM OF
INCREASING SECURITY

BUILDING ON
CCTV
INTELLIGENCE
REPORTS
AND SHARING
WITH PARTNERSHIPS

FINALISED UPGRADE
OF ALL
154 CAMERAS
TO **DIGITAL**
PLATFORM

ANNUAL SELF-ASSESSMENT
COMPLIANCE WITH
CCTV
REGULATIONS/
STANDARDS

12 MONTH
CONTINUED
IMPROVEMENT
ACTION PLAN

Eringden High Rise Block

The resident support officer for the Eringden high rise blocks has continued to develop a strong sense of community for the residents within the block.

Community events and seasonal activities are now being organised between residents and the resident support officer. This year residents organised a Christmas raffle and the Easter Bunny visited the Eringden block leaving small chocolate eggs on the landing areas for residents to find. Each fortnight on a Thursday residents, with the resident support officer, visit the pantry at St Martins Church, it is a charitable organisation that supplies food, toiletries etc. for the local residents. Residents also run a weekly 'cleanest landing' competition judged by the resident support officer.

Riverside High Rise Flats

Following a successful trial creating a new role of high rise co-ordinator the post has now been made permanent, offering tailored support to high rise living and coordinating across multiple departments and agencies to help create a more consistent service for residents.

**WEEKLY
VISUAL HEALTH
& SAFETY
INSPECTIONS**
AROUND COMMUNAL
AREAS IN HIGH RISE
BLOCKS

**SUPPORTED
WATES**
TO HELP DELIVER
COMMUNITY
EVENTS

**DROP IN SESSION AT
HIGH RISE
SOCIAL CLUB**
WITH LOCAL
POLICE SERVICE
TO SUPPORT ONGOING
ASB INVESTIGATION

**PROVIDED TAILORED
SUPPORT AND
ASSISTANCE**
TO RESIDENTS DURING
SOIL PIPE REPLACEMENT
PROGRAMME

**MONTHLY
LIFT
ALARM
TESTING**

**SUPPORT
WITH COMMS
& UPDATES
TO RESIDENTS**
CO-ORDINATING WITH
EXTERNAL COMPANIES AND
INTERNAL DEPARTMENTS TO
ENSURE RESIDENTS ARE KEPT
AS INFORMED AS POSSIBLE

**PARTNERED WITH
STAFFORDSHIRE
COUNTY COUNCIL
TO RUN A
WORKSHOP**
WITH HIGH RISE RESIDENTS
AS PART OF THEIR
COMMUNITY CHAMPIONS
CAMPAIGN

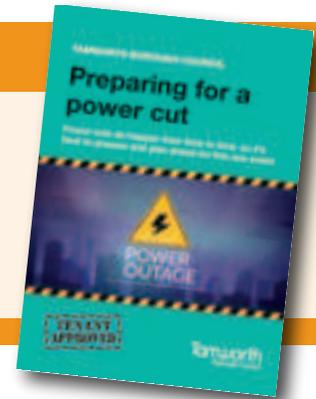
**ATTEND
TENANT
PARTICIPATION
MEETINGS**
FOR TENANT INPUT ON
UPDATES TO NEW LITERATURE
FOR HIGH RISE BLOCKS

**WEEKLY
HEALTH
& SAFETY
INSPECTIONS**
IN HIGH RISE SOCIAL CLUB,
INCLUDING FIRE ALARM
TESTING



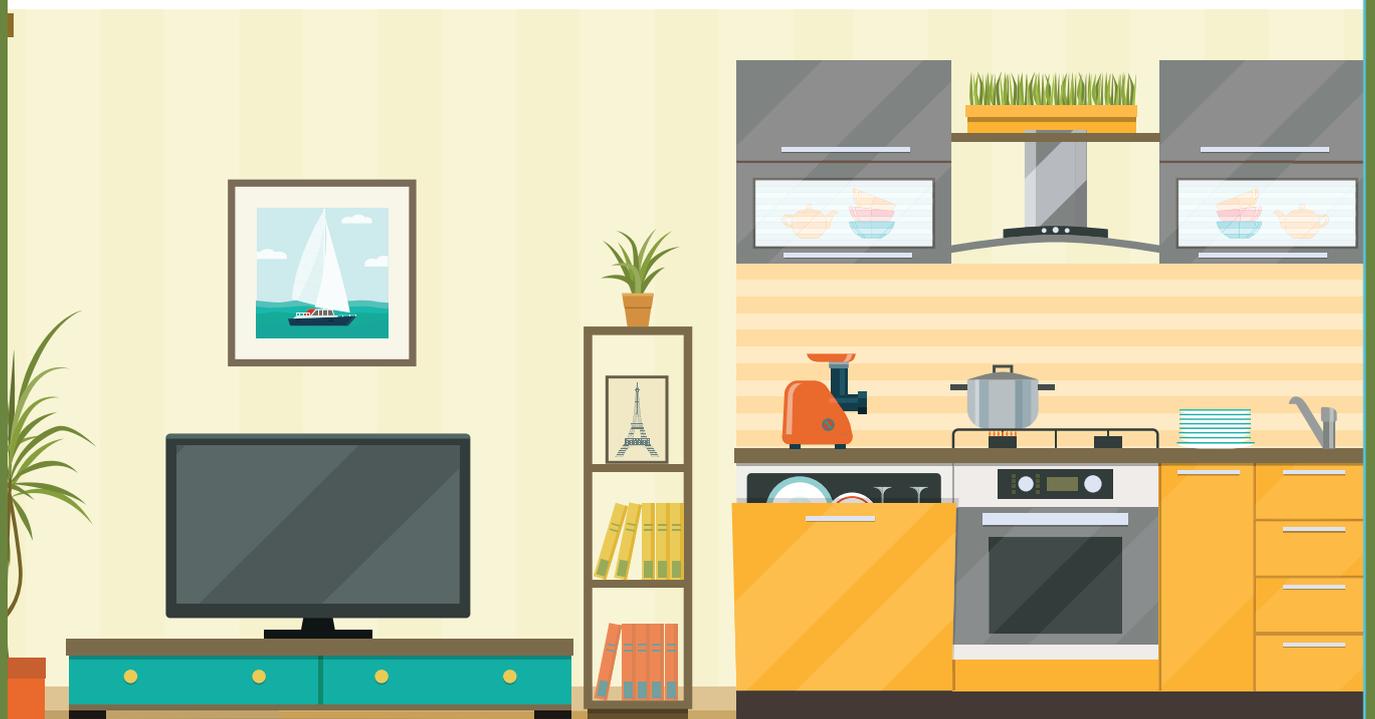
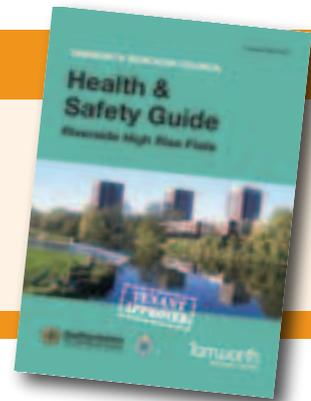
POWER OUTAGE LEAFLET

A new advisory leaflet for residents on what to expect and how to prepare for possible power outages was developed and distributed to all residents as almost all services within the high rise blocks would be disrupted in the event of a power cut



HIGH RISE HEALTH AND SAFETY GUIDE

A full and extensive review of the health and safety guide was completed. Including consultation with the Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service and the Staffordshire Police Service to make sure the guide was compliant with the most current health and safety guidelines and regulations.



Anti-Social Behaviour

The team continued to work hard over the last 12 months, achieving a number of successful outcomes, all of which help towards making your neighbourhood safe.

	2020/2021	2021/2022	2022/2023
Number of complaints received	162	182	565*
Percentage of customers satisfied that they were kept informed throughout their ASB case	64%	54%	61%
Percentage of customers satisfied with the support given to them during their ASB case	66%	63%	66%
Percentage of customers satisfied with the outcome of their ASB complaint	66%	59%	47%
Successfully closed ASB cases (resolved)	98%	97%	97%
Percentage of customers who have already made a complaint of ASB, who would be willing to report ASB in the future	87%	80%	71%

**This figure now includes Community ASB, Environmental complaints and nuisance/ abandoned vehicles which is why the number of complaints is so much higher than previous years.*

Number of ASB cases: **565**

Number of Civil Injunctions: **2**

Number of Notice Seeking Possession/Demotion: **2**

Number of possessions: **1**

Number of Fixed Penalty Notices: **2**



Nature of Incident	AS A PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL CASES
Nuisance/abandoned vehicles	44%
Environmental issues	12%
Noise	9%
Animal nuisance	5%
Garden nuisance	5%
Verbal abuse/harassment/threats	5%
Drugs	3%
Other	17%

**The garden figure has now been amended this year, as community wardens now monitor front gardens so the figure reflects housing rear gardens only.*

Intervention

Intervention remains a key factor in how we deal with anti-social behaviour cases. The team intervene as early as possible where evidence is provided. This often prevents enforcement action from being taken. In 2022/23 early intervention was carried out with **189 cases** to successfully resolve them.

Local events supported by community wardens

Some highlights of events community wardens supported over the last year:

7 – 8 April 2022	Engagement event at Castle Grounds both days with police
8 April 2022	Police Community Engagement Event at Assembly Rooms
13 April 2022	Police Community Engagement Event at Dosthill Park
20 April 2022	Commonwealth games day Castle Grounds
22 September 2022	Remembrance book St Editha's Church for the passing of Late Queen Elizabeth
1 November 2022	Community Safety Partnership event, held at the Assembly Rooms
17 – 18 November 2022	Police Community Engagement Event – Tesco Amington
15 December 2022	Police and Community engagement focus on -vehicle crime prevention and gave out purse bells at Ventura Park

Looking forward

A new corporate anti social behaviour service will be introduced in May 2023. The service will take all complaints of anti social behaviour on a tenure neutral basis (with the exception of statutory Environmental Health issues), triage, offer advice/assistance and case management. The new service will combine housing and private occupiers and offer a new service standard. Keep an eye on our website for more news.

We will be reviewing policies, procedures and best practice with a view to attaining national accreditation through Housemark. We are looking for people who have a passion for reducing anti social behaviour (or who have been affected by it) to follow us on this journey, scrutinising our service along the way. If this is of interest to you, please contact our Tenant Involvement team.

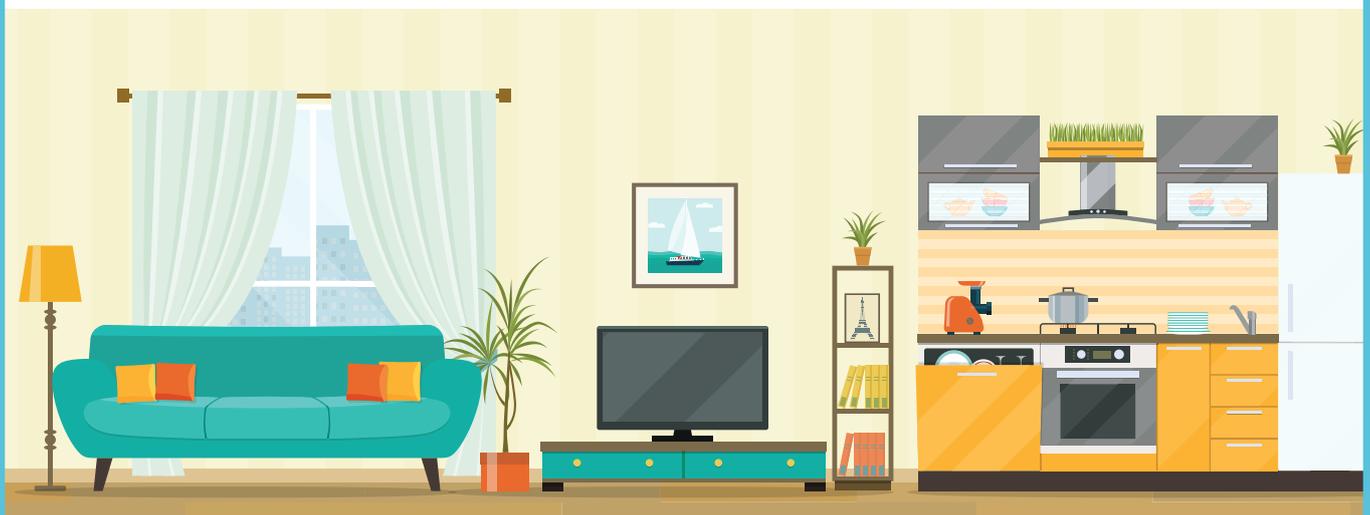


8 Value for money

In this section we explain how we make sure that our services provide value for money.

Tamworth Borough Council recognises the importance of demonstrating value for money, which doesn't only mean keeping costs to a minimum. Value for money is also achieved through the following:

- Comparing costs and performance with other similar housing providers. We assess value for money, by using an independent organisation called HouseMark. This organisation compares our services to other councils and registered social landlords HouseMark also produces an annual report which identifies areas for improvement
- Monitoring 'tenant satisfaction that rent is providing value for money'. We check this by carrying out regular tenant satisfaction surveys
- Continue to remove old inefficient gas appliances and install new 'A' rated appliances, reducing heating and hot water energy costs for tenants across the borough
- Regularly review budgets and the highest areas of spending
- Spent more than **£3,371,033** on improvements to homes ensuring that our core business of providing affordable homes to those in need continues to expand
- Regularly review process to provide more streamlined cost effective services for customers.
- Provide hands on support to residents at high risk of homelessness to support with transition into secure tenancies – this has improved success in maintaining tenancies and reduced void costs.
- A comprehensive management performance framework in place to clearly identify the performance levels we wish to achieve
- Investing in its properties to maintain them at a high standard for both current and future tenants.



DID YOU KNOW?

The following indicators have been agreed with tenants

	2020/2021	2021/2022	2022/2023	Estimated top quartile*
*Overall satisfaction with landlord services	Unable to complete	The Star survey to be undertaken in 2023	78%	86.5%
Average time between lettings	36.2 days	38 days	52 days	18.53 days
Estate inspections	Unable to complete	10	10	Not benchmarked
Tenant satisfaction with communal cleaning	Unable to complete	76%	76%	Not benchmarked
Number of tenants on the database of involvement	479	417	407	Not benchmarked
% of repair appointments made and kept	87%	97%	95%	97%
Gas servicing CP12	99%	98%	99.93%	100%
% of repairs completed on first visit	90%	95%	87%	94%
Customer satisfaction with responsive repairs	95%	97%	85%	93%
Arrears as a % of rent due	2.66%	2.77%	2.60%	3.61%
Number of evictions	0	2 (0.20%)	9	0.17%

* Figures based on estimated top quartile range when benchmarked nationally.



Top performance indicators as voted for by tenants as at 31 March 2023

Performance Indicator	Target	Current value	Are we on target?	Trend
Percentage of appointments made and kept	93%	97%		
Percentage of repairs completed on first visit	85%	95%		
Percentage of properties with a valid Gas Safety Certificate	100%	99.93%		
Average re-let times (in days)	18 days	52 days		
Percentage of closed resolved anti-social behaviour cases	-	97%	-	-
Percentage of closed unresolved anti-social behaviour cases	-	3%	-	-
Current rent arrears as a percentage of annual debit	3%	2.6%		
Number of complaints since 1 April 2022	-	88	-	-
Number of complaints upheld since 1 April 2022	-	1	-	-
Number of compliments since 1 April 2022	-	21	-	-

We are committed to ensuring that people are not disadvantaged in accessing our services. We will make reasonable adjustments for those people that need further assistance, depending on the individual's needs, further guidance can be found in our Reasonable Adjustments guidance Equality and diversity | Tamworth Borough Council.

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



www.tamworth.gov.uk

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