



State of Tamworth Debate

26th November 2014

Introduction

This year the report look at progress made against the themes of this year's Tamworth Listens Question Time event;

- Regeneration and Growth,
- Healthier communities,
- Safer communities.

It highlights achievements and issues backed up by performance information and public opinion gained through our consultation activities, where available.

This approach is intended to encourage debate in the Council Chamber on those things important in Tamworth.

Appendices are attached

Appendix A	Tamworth Listens Question Time Event 2014 Responses
Appendix B	Budget Consultation Report 2015/16
Appendix C	Tamworth Enhanced District Profile 2014
Appendix D	Health Profile 2014

Regeneration and Growth

To support regeneration and growth, Tamworth Borough Council and its partners work towards the strategic priority to Aspire and Prosper in Tamworth.

The primary outcome is to create and sustain a thriving local economy and make Tamworth a more aspirational and competitive place to do business.

This will be achieved through the following objectives:

- Raising the aspiration and attainment levels of young people
- Creating opportunities for business growth through developing and using skills and talent
- Promoting private sector growth and creating quality employment locally
- Branding and marketing “Tamworth” as a great place to “live life to the full”
- Creating the physical and technological infrastructure necessary to support the achievement of this primary outcome.

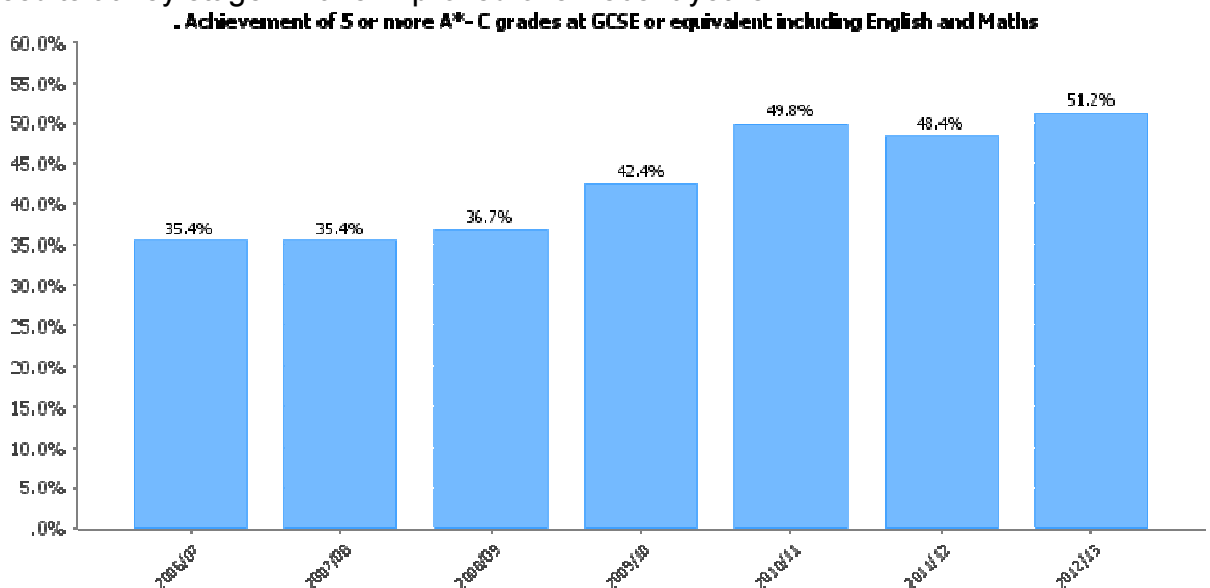
Raising the aspiration and attainment levels of young people

Raising the aspiration and attainment levels of young people was seen as important by 73% of respondents to the 2015/16 budget consultation exercise. Comments made reinforced this:

“We must make our youngsters aim higher to ensure we have the right skills in the workforce”.

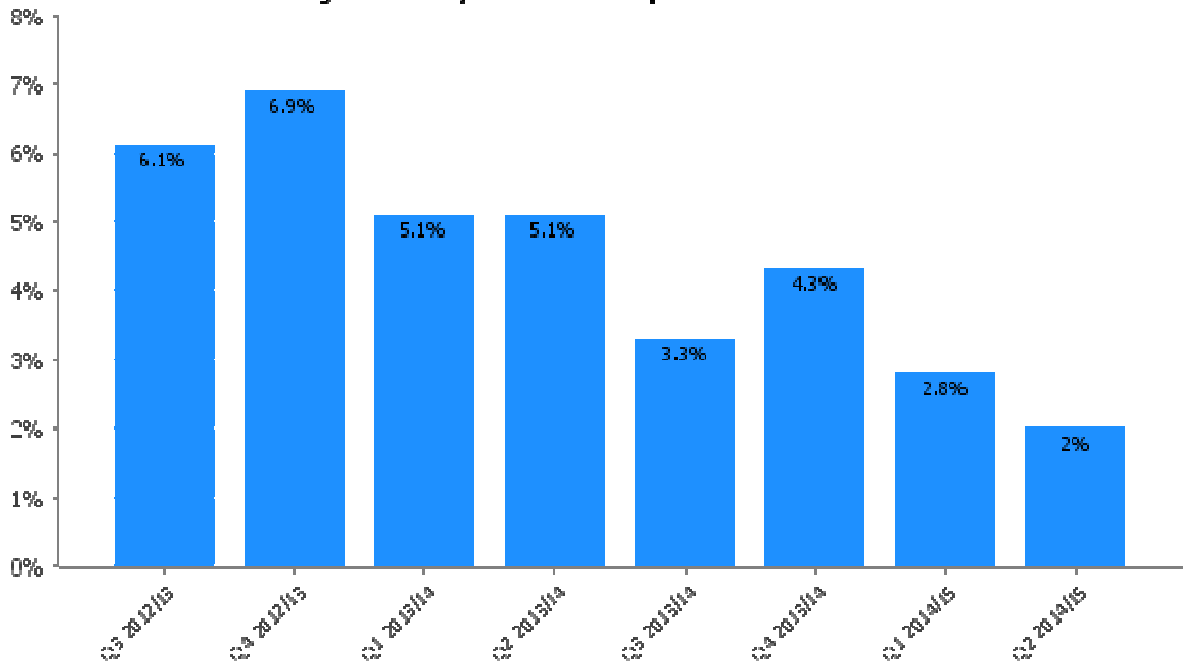
“If the aspiration and attainment levels are looked into, the youth crime and anti-social behaviour would (hopefully) be dealt with. I appreciate it will never be completely gone but I feel sure it would help.”

Results at key stage 4 have improved over recent years

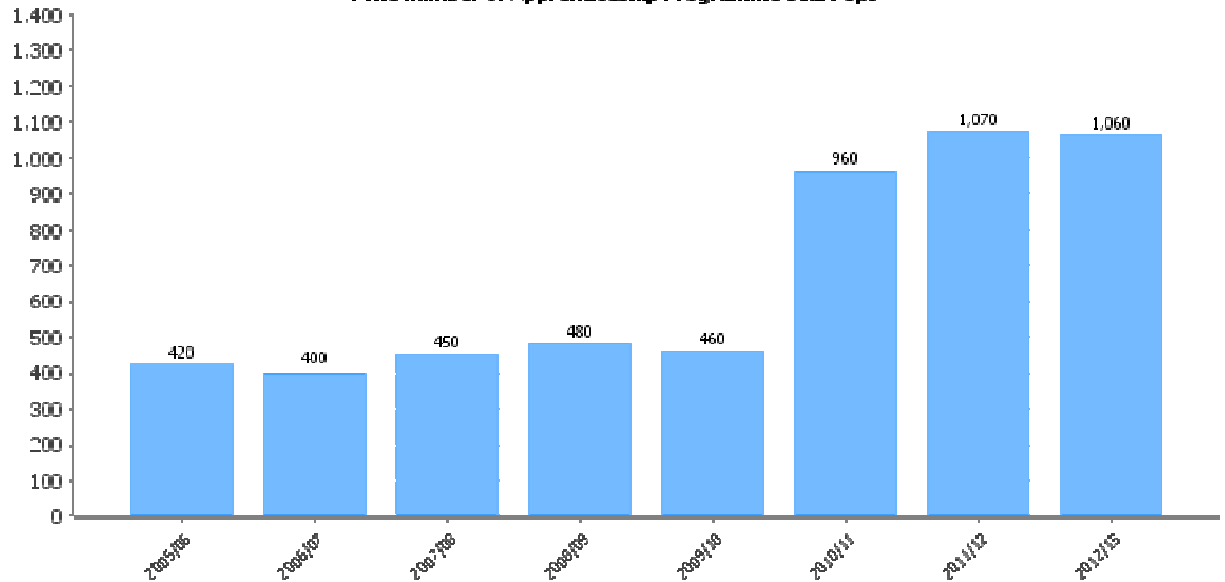


The situation for young people is also improving as the percentage of 18-24 year olds in receipt of job seekers allowance is falling and the number of apprenticeships shows significant increases over the last three years.

. Percentage of 18 -24 year olds in receipt of Job Seekers Allowance



. The number of Apprenticeship Programme Start Ups



Creating opportunities for business growth through developing and using skills and talent and promote private sector growth and create quality employment locally

Although improving, the educational attainment of young people in Tamworth will have substantial benefits over the longer term, tackling skills issues for the current working age population is just as important.

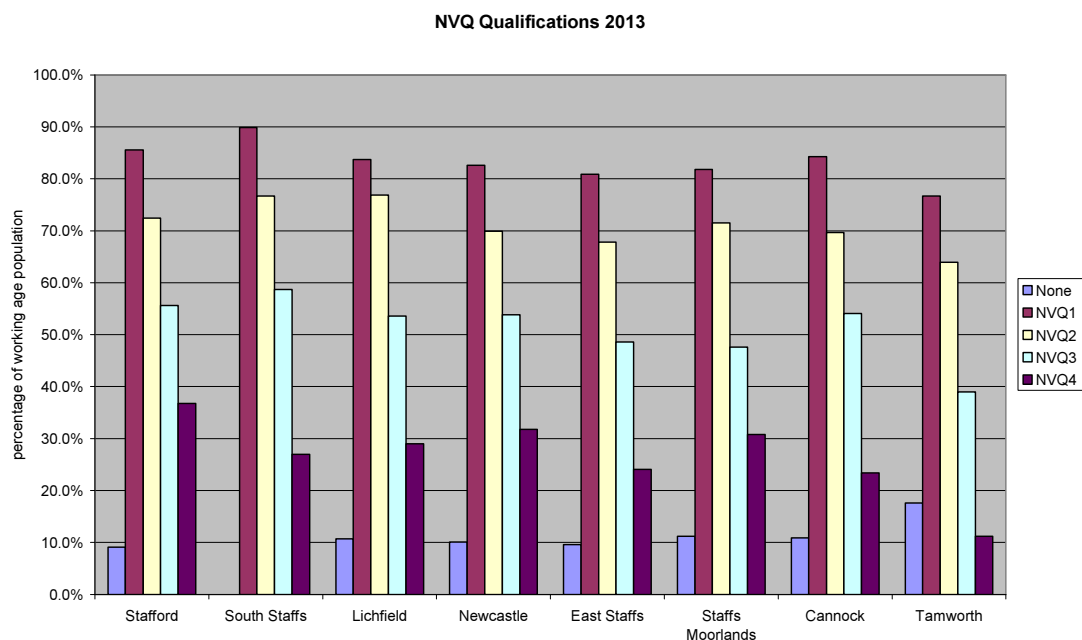
The objective 'create opportunities for business growth through developing and using skills and talent' was seen as important by 75% of responders to the 2015/16 budget consultation exercise.

The objective to 'promote private sector growth and create quality employment locally' was seen as important by 83% of responders to the 2015/16 budget consultation exercise, the highest under this priority. With nearly 72% of respondents believing that good job prospects are an important factor in making somewhere a good place to live. This was supported by some of the comments:

"The emphasis must be on....increased availability of local job opportunities."

"It is important to grow and sustain businesses in the area helping to create local job opportunities."

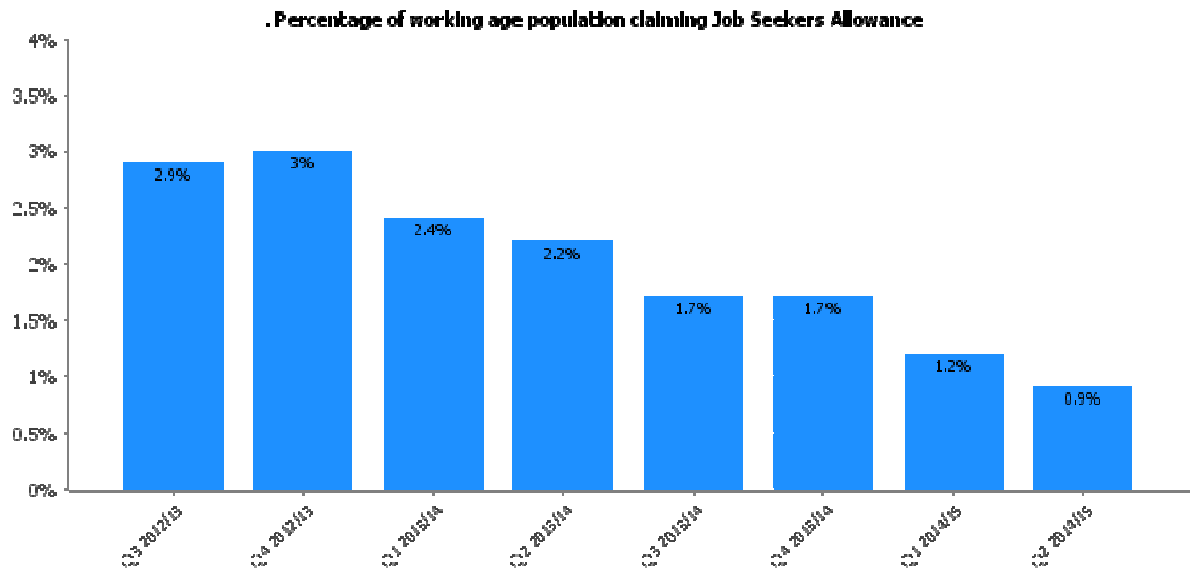
"More job prospects and better wages for all age groups."



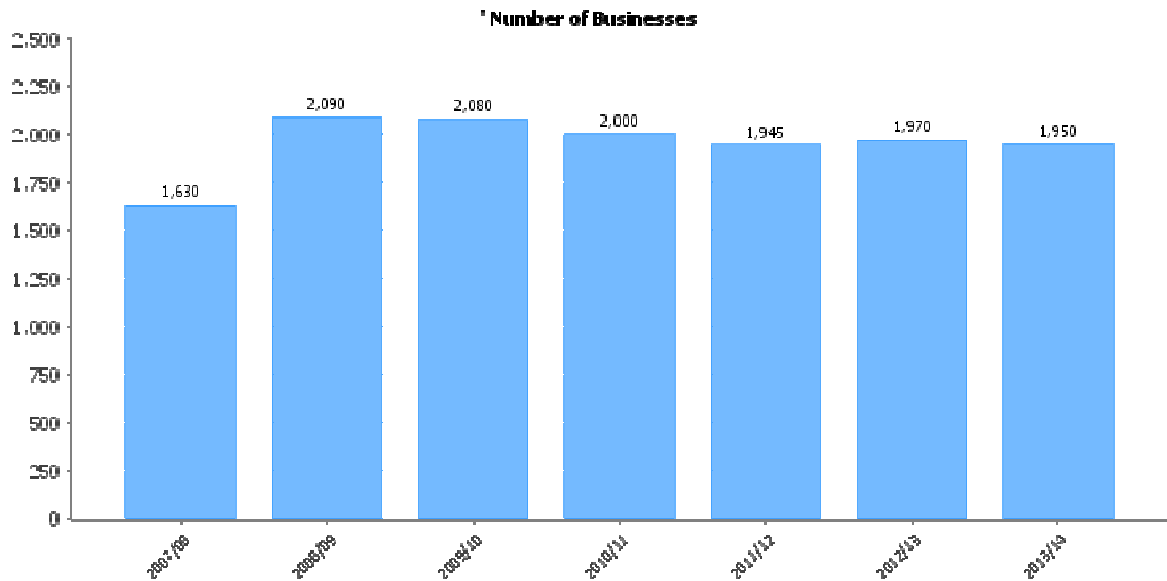
Claimant count is a key measure of unemployment and measures those people claiming Jobseeker's Allowance benefit (JSA).

In September 2014 there were 448 people claiming JSA in Tamworth, 0.9% of the working age population. This was one of the lowest of the Staffordshire districts, lower than the county rate of 1.2% and the regional (2.8%) and

national (2.2%) rates. Since 2009, the overall numbers and rate have fallen and despite a slight increase in March 2012, the trend is downwards again.

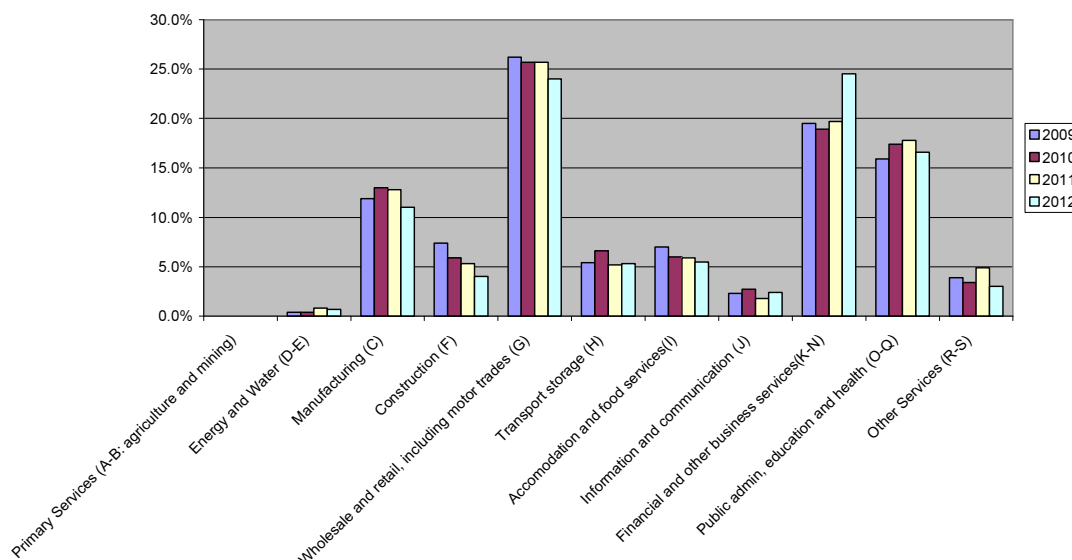


The numbers of businesses in Tamworth has remained stable over the past few years



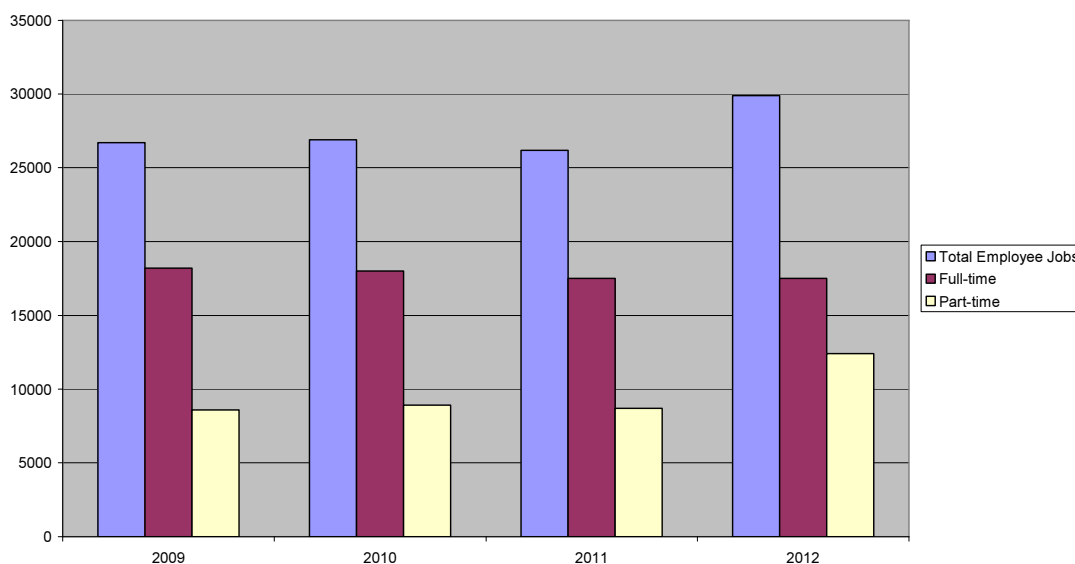
There are nearly 30,000 employee jobs in Tamworth with wholesale and retail and financial and other business services accounting for almost 50% of these.

Percentage of jobs in Tamworth by broad industrial group
2009-2012



The number of full time jobs has remained quite stable over the last four years whereas the number of part time jobs has increased.

Employee Jobs
2009-2012



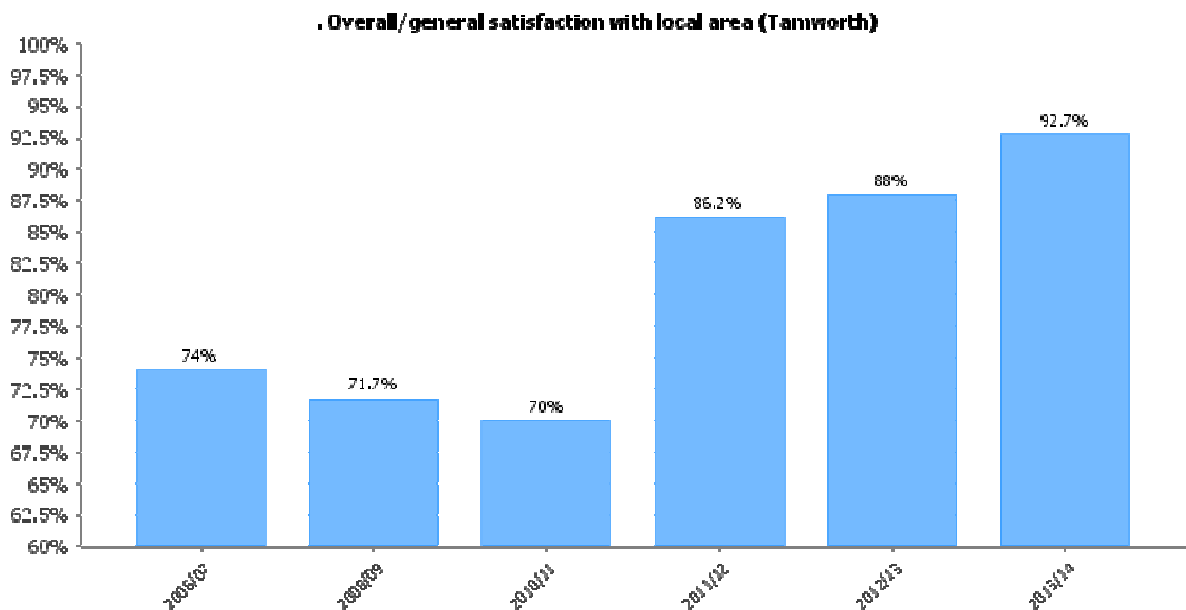
When asked to select five top priorities to assist business and the economy, those respondents to the business budget consultation exercise 2015/16 chose the following as the top two priorities above all others;

- reducing business rates and other charges (78%)
- reducing the number of empty business premises (64.3%).

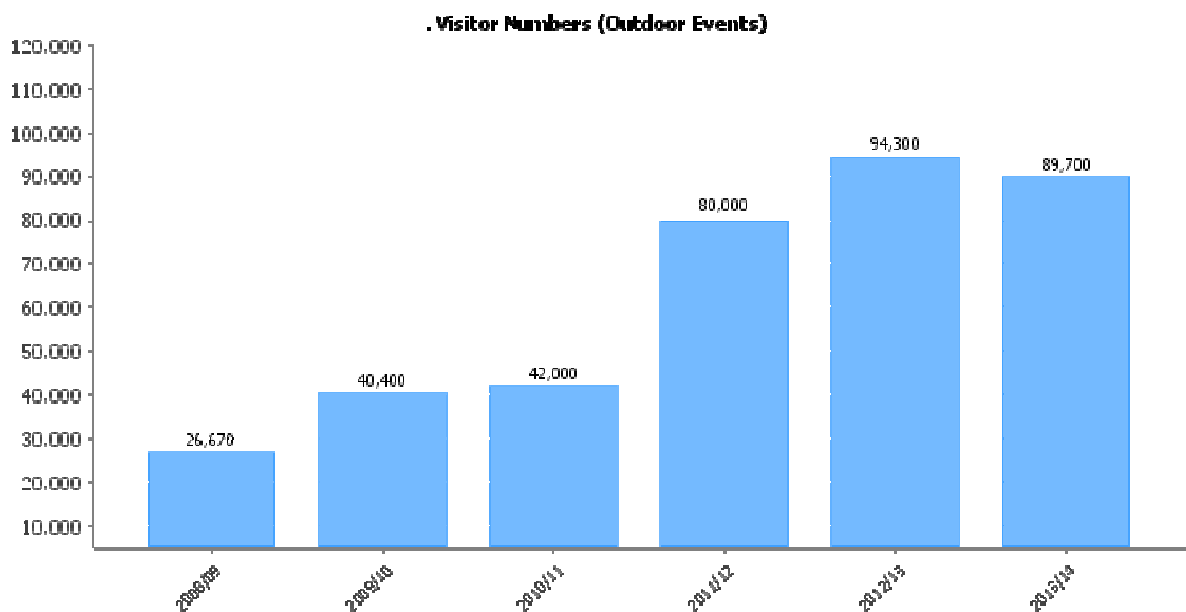
Branding and marketing “Tamworth” as a great place to “live life to the full”

This objective was seen as important by 57% of people in the 2015/16 budget consultation exercise; the lowest under this priority.

People would appear to be increasingly satisfied with Tamworth as an area to live.



The varied outdoor events programme attracts large number of visitors to Tamworth which, in turn, generates spend in the town.



Creating the physical and technological infrastructure necessary to support the achievement of this primary outcome

This objective was seen as important by 61% of people in the 2015/16 budget consultation exercise; one of the lowest under this priority. However, the nature of questions posed at the Question Time event (see below), particularly around house building plans in the Borough, would appear to indicate that this is in fact a very important issue for the residents of Tamworth.

At the Tamworth Listens Question Time Event in November 2014, a number of questions were asked on the theme of regeneration and growth. The questions posed reflect those things that are important to Tamworth residents in this area. These are listed below and the responses are contained at Appendix A.

Why is Tamworth so dirty and rubbish strewn? It's a disgrace when compared with other towns.

Is Tamworth creating more jobs?

What is the medium term plan for outdoor leisure facilities in Tamworth given that we have a closed golf course, little or no tennis facilities, a football club on it's knees, an under funded rugby club and public pitches that have seen better days? Are we to assume the Tamworth Borough Council is relying on an expensive private club/sector to provide these facilities meaning that we all pay more for facilities that should be provided by our council?

Who is responsible or the appalling condition of the streets in the town centre? Staffordshire Highways or you? It is supposed to be a pedestrian area but with all the traffic, walking is a nightmare. Why aren't the rules reinforced regarding cars using the streets?

How can we trust that the leader and the Council of Tamworth of being capable of getting the best deal for Tamworth and making decisions for the town around the sale of land for housing?

After the recent fiascos with the closure of the golf course and the previous issues with the swimming baths and Icelandic bank, when they said this was the best deal for Tamworth at the time, yet through a few checks could have found out that their decisions were later flawed. Do they believe that their ability to make the so called tough decisions is creditable and do they apologise for the closure and demise of one of this countries best leisure facilities in Tamworth?

Will the council be writing into the contract with the builders the green spaces they promised the residents of Amington on the golf course land?

Will the Council use an alternative "construction access point" instead of Eagle Drive to lessen the impact of the construction on the local community and will the Council consider revising the "Masterplan" to provide open, level

(to facilitate walking) green recreational space for the health and well-being of the community near Eagle Drive?

I understand that you intend to build houses on Ashby Road along with Lichfield District Council. How many and should they be occupied by Tamworth residents?

I understand you are closing the youth clubs in Tamworth, do you intend to close the libraries and the Police Station.

On October 20th 1989, The Herald said “a glossy brochure is being produced to woo private companies into investing in Tamworth’s latest £3.3million tourist attraction. The borough council hopes its proposed Saxon Centre will attract more than 250,000 visitors a year by the end of the mid 1990’s” What’s happened? Is the Council pursuing the project determinedly?

In the report to the Tamworth Borough Council Planning Committee on the 9th September 2014 in respect of the Anker Valley Planning Application 0275/2014, a section headed Staffordshire County Council-The Highways Authority 8.7 on page 16 referring to Capital Funding, states that a further £1m local authority revenue support in the period to 2021. May I ask if Tamworth Borough Council is one of these local authorities, and if so, how much of the £1m will Tamworth Borough Council have to contribute?

Regarding the number of shop closures in Ankerside and the town centre; when is something positive going to be done about this appalling situation? We used to have a camera shop and a bookshop in the town, now there seems to be more card, mobile phone, hock shops, two artificial fag shops and charity shops. Please councillors, drop your party politics for a while, work for the people who voted you into your influential positions and give us a town to be proud of.

Are the Council quietly presiding over another overspill which will change the face of Tamworth as the previous overspill agreement with Birmingham did in the past. I ask this question because I do not believe anyone in the Council is taking the whole picture into account with regard to decisions which are made?

Where will the surface water from the proposed Anker Valley housing development go; the River Anker?

What impact will HS2 have on the M42 roundabout?

What is the County Council’s maintenance programme for gullies in Tamworth?

Healthier Communities

To support healthier communities, Tamworth Borough Council and its partners work towards the strategic priority to be healthier and safer in Tamworth.

The primary outcome is to create a safe environment in which local people can reach their full potential and live longer, healthier lives.

This will be achieved through the following objectives:

- Addressing the causes of poor health in children and young people;
- Improving the health and well being of older people by supporting them to live active, independent lives;
- Reducing the harm and wider consequences of alcohol abuse on individuals, families and society;

When asked to select five things that make somewhere a good place to live, good health services was seen as important by nearly 72% of respondents in the 2015/16 budget consultation exercise.

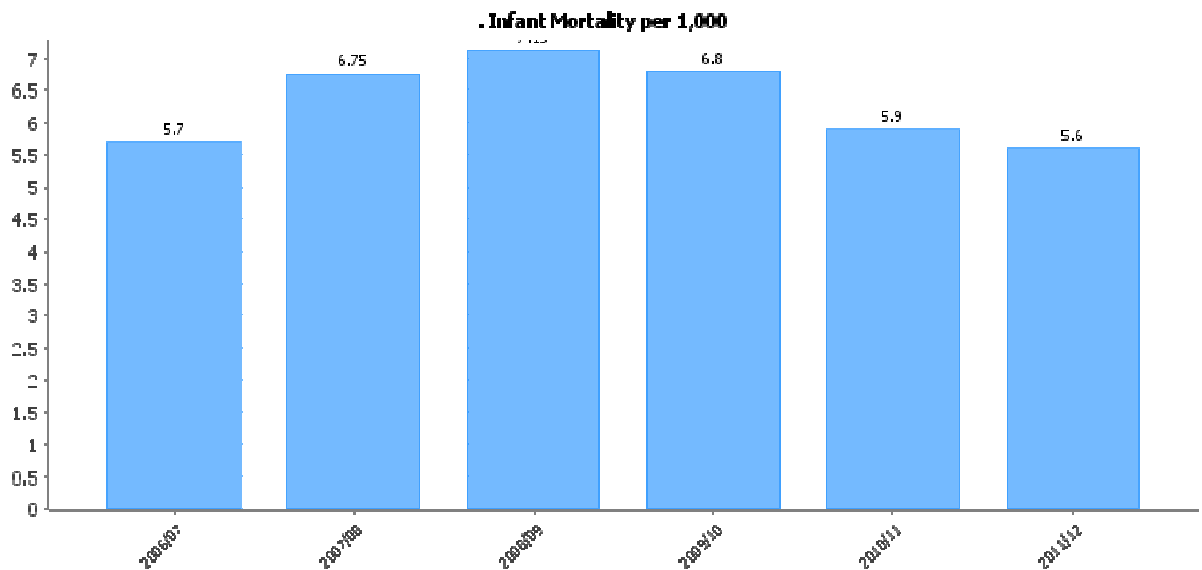
Addressing the causes of poor health in children and young people

Addressing the causes of poor health in children and young people was seen as important by 64% of respondents in the 2015/16 budget consultation exercise. Comments made were:

“Poor health in children is often due to lack of education in their parents”

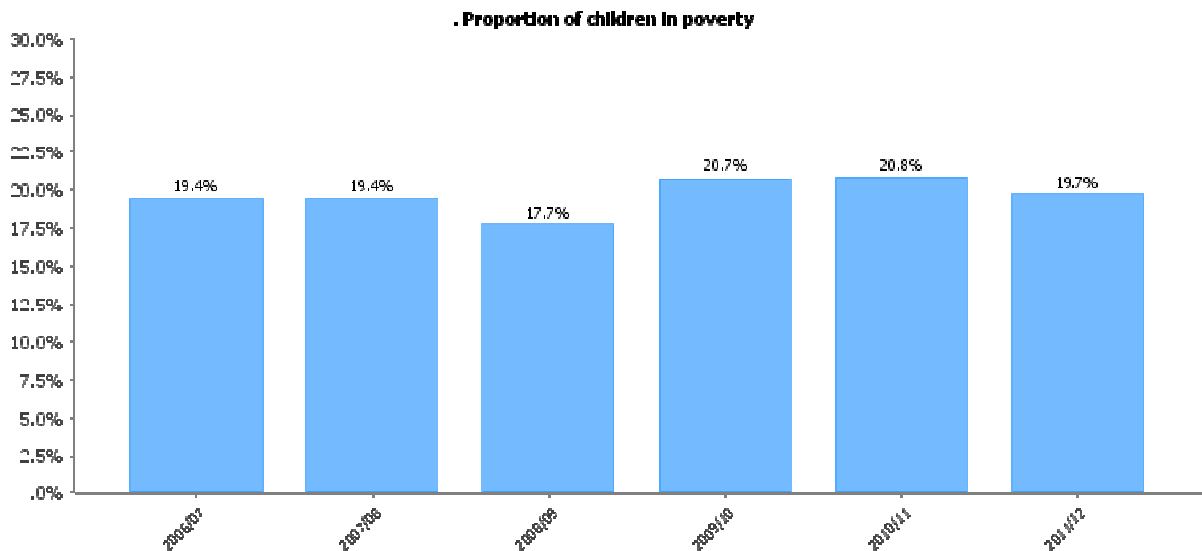
“Educate children with domestic science in schools and that may help improve children's health.”

The rate of infant mortality has continued to improve over the past three years but is still higher than the England average of 4.1 per 1,000.

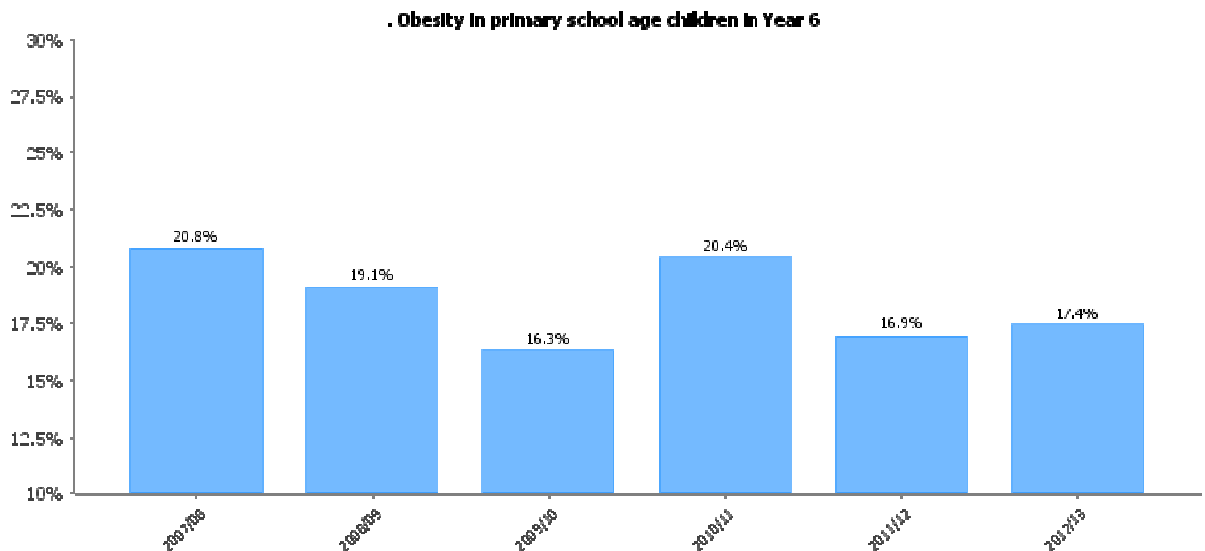


Other useful indicators under this objective are;
 Smoking in pregnancy: 15.1% against the England average of 12.7%,
 Teenage pregnancy: 4.4% against the England average of 2.7%

The number of children in poverty has also continued to improve and is lower than the England average of 20.6%



Obesity is a significant health issue as it impacts on a person's quality of life. Whilst there was a slight increase in the percentage figure of obesity in primary school children in year six, it is still lower than the England average of 18.9% and England worst figure of 27.3%.



Other useful indicators under this objective are;

Smoking in pregnancy: 15.1% against the England average of 12.7%,

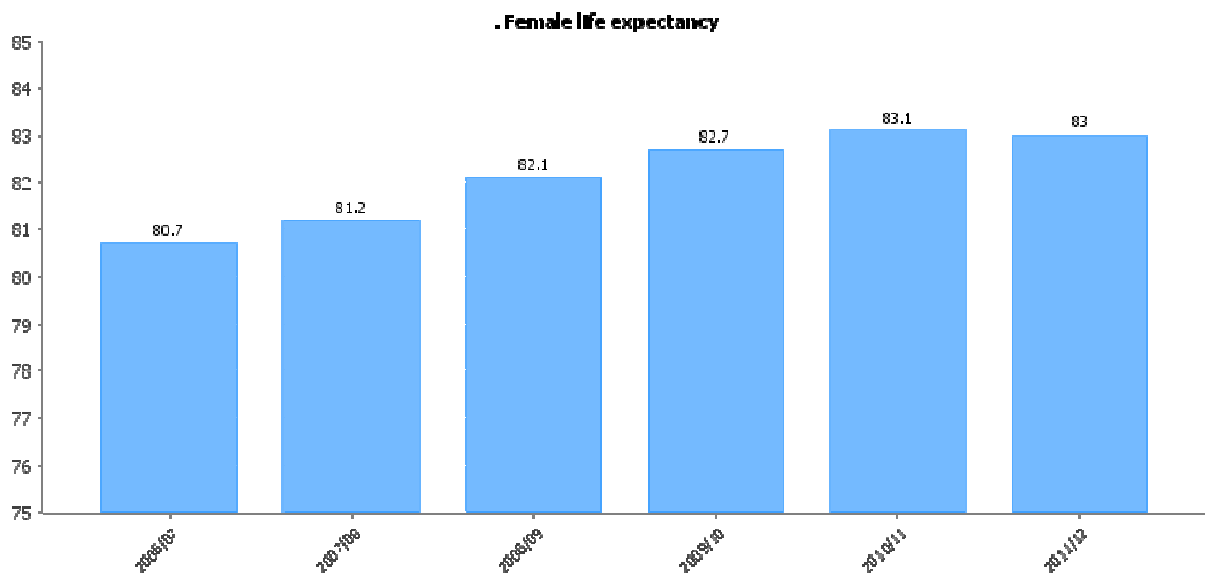
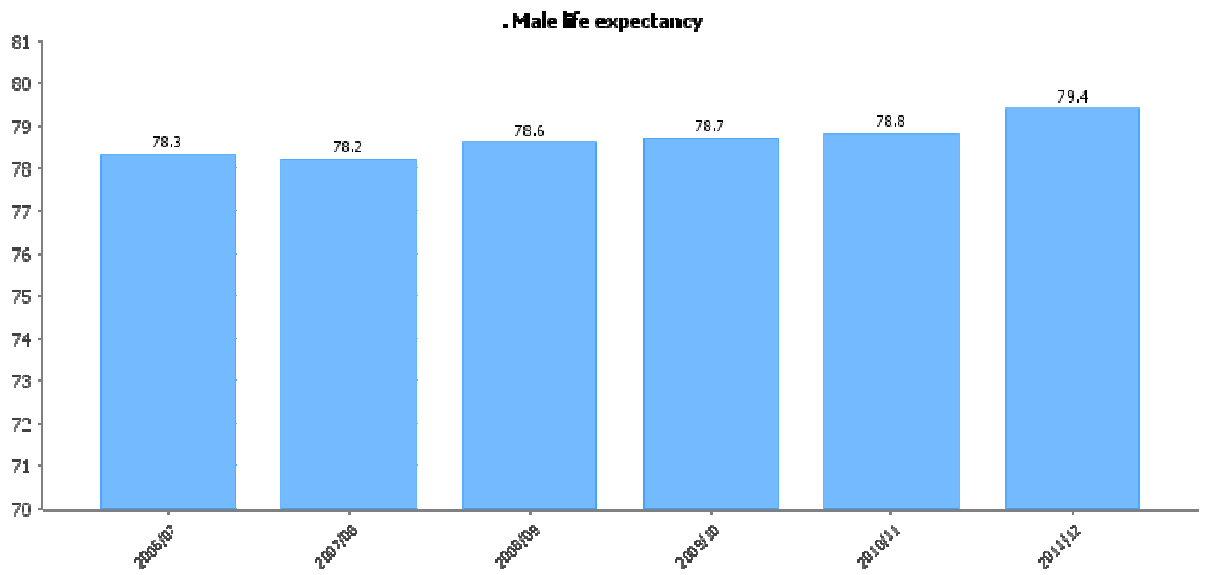
Teenage pregnancy: 44.0% against the England average of 27.7%

Improving the health and well being of older people by supporting them to live active, independent lives

Improving the health and well being of older people by supporting them to live active, independent lives was seen as important by 64% of respondents in the 2015/16 budget consultation exercise. One comment received indicated how important it is:

“Tamworth has an ageing population and the key to reducing acute demand especially where long term conditions exist is to ensure that they are supported to live independently in their own homes through joined up services that are the eyes and ears for each other and that they are enabled to make sensible and well informed choices.”

The overall health of people has improved over the past decade; people are living longer. Life expectancy for a female is 83.0 (compared to 83.0 nationally) and a male is 79.4 (compared to 79.2 nationally).



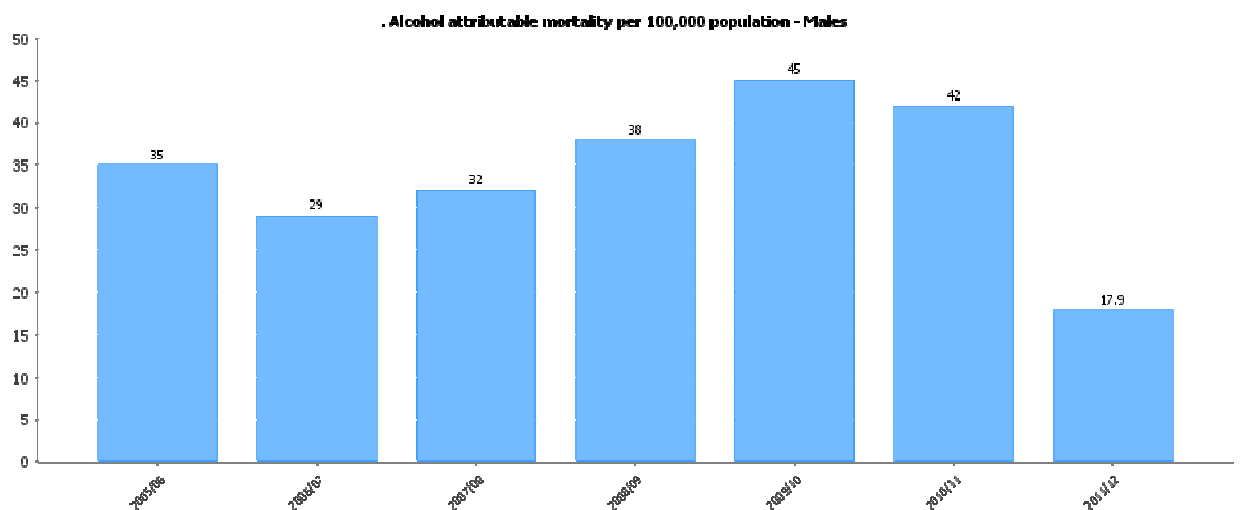
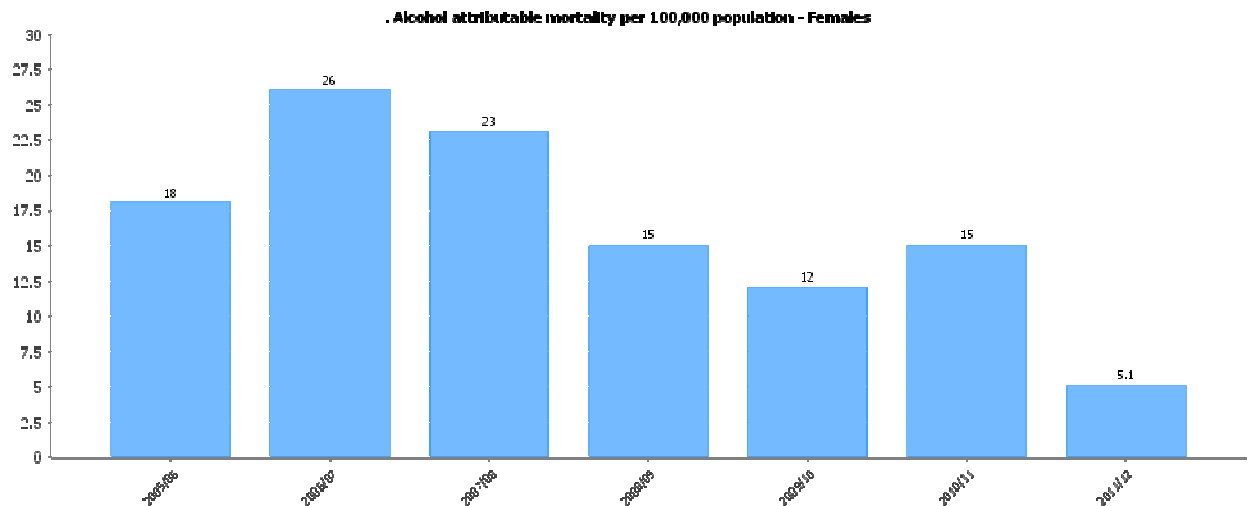
The percentage of older people living alone is an important indicator under this objective. At 10.9% Tamworth has the best rate in Staffordshire and is better than the England average of 12%.

The dependency ratio for older people, which measures the ratio of older people to the working age population, is 24.0 per 100; the best rate in Staffordshire. It is also better than the England average of 26.4.

Reducing the harm and wider consequences of alcohol abuse on individuals, families and society

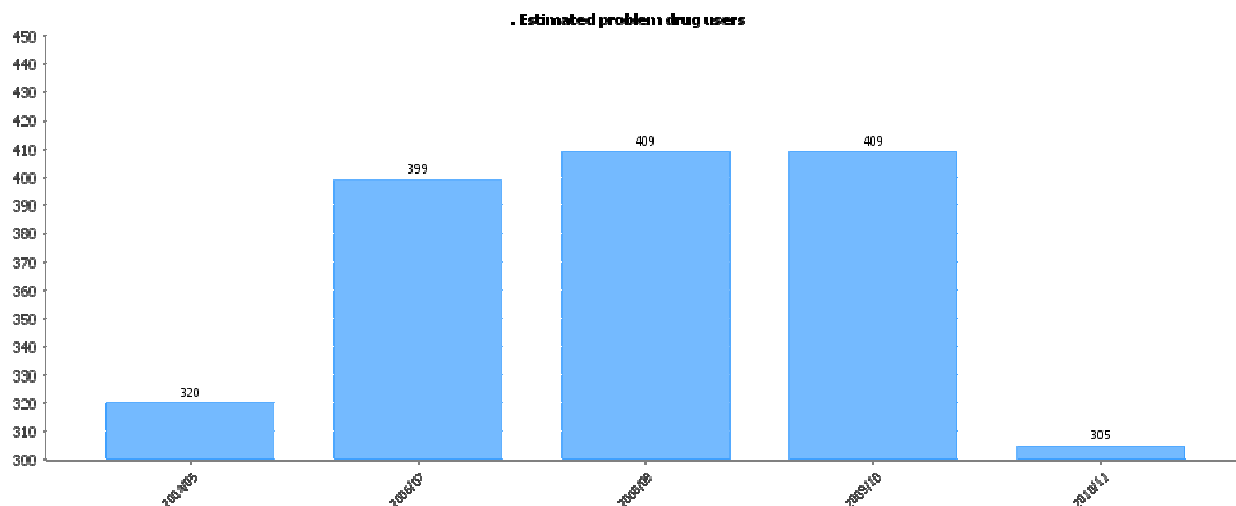
This objective was seen as important by 58% of respondents in the 2015/16 budget consultation exercise; the lowest under this priority.

Alcohol attributable mortality is one indicator used to measure the effects of alcohol.



Alcohol related admissions to hospital in Tamworth are 613 per 100,000 which is better than the England average of 637.

The latest available estimated number of problem drug users is lower than it has been for a number of years.



At the Tamworth Listens Question Time Event in November 2014, a number of questions were asked on the theme of healthier communities. The questions posed reflect those things that are important to Tamworth residents in this area. These are listed below and the responses are contained at Appendix A

In view of the expected rise in population in Tamworth over the next Local Plan period, what provisions are to be made to improve hospital facilities for the local population? In particular, A & E facilities. Currently access during evening and night-time is difficult in the extreme.

Is the proposed reduction in public toilets a health risk to those using the town centre?

With further pressures on social care budgets expected next year, how does the panel intend to address the growing problem in the care sector of attracting a professional, fully trained and motivated workforce when wages are barely at the minimum wage level?

When are we, in Tamworth going to get our long awaited hospital? It would seem that our councillors are more interested in increasing the population by building more houses than providing a much needed service to the town which has a population approaching 80,000. What happens to the occupants if they get sick? Go to Burton 15 miles away? Go to Good Hope, which is probably going to lose some of its valuable services to another hospital or hospitals even further away?

If, as has been stated, Sir Robert Peel hospital is underused, who is responsible for that, certainly not the people of Tamworth? Make that hospital useable by allowing it to offer day surgery.

Safer Communities

To support safer communities, Tamworth Borough Council and its partners work towards the strategic priority to be healthier and safer in Tamworth.

The primary outcome is to create a safe environment in which local people can reach their full potential and live longer, healthier lives.

This will be achieved through the following objectives:

- Implement 'Total Place' solutions to tackling crime and ASB in designated localities;
- Develop innovative early interventions to tackle youth crime and ASB; and
- Create an integrated approach to protecting those most vulnerable in our local Communities

Implementing 'Total Place' solutions to tackling crime and Anti-Social Behaviour in designated localities and developing innovative early interventions to tackle youth crime and Anti-Social Behaviour;

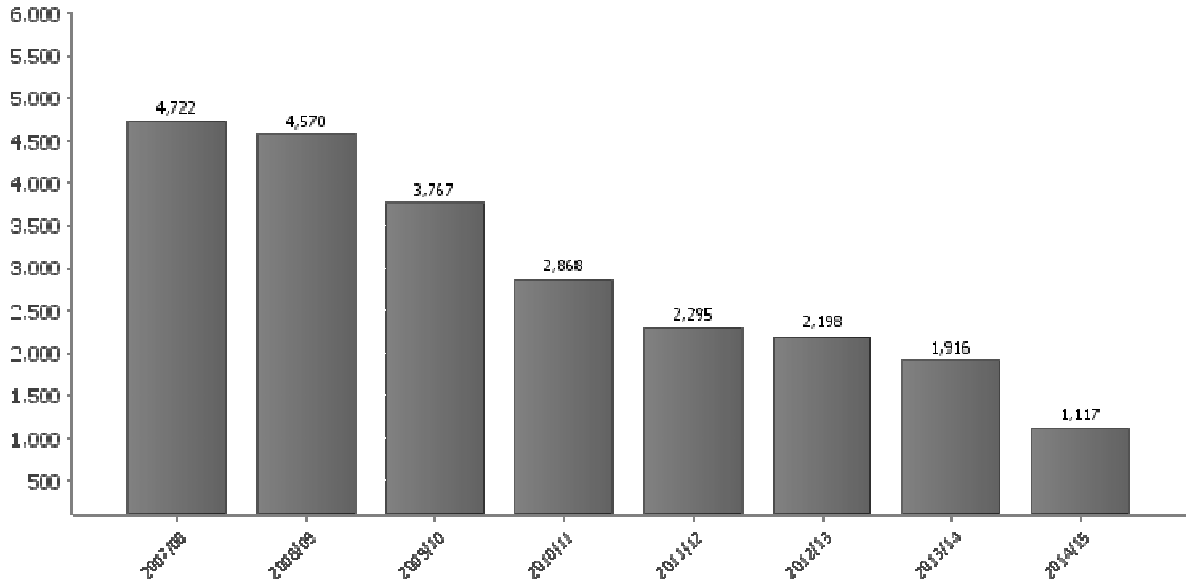
When asked to select five things that make somewhere a good place to live, low levels of crime was seen as important by 85% of respondents in the 2015/16 budget consultation exercise, 61% of respondents felt that more money should be spent on tackling anti-social behaviour and 79% of people rated tackling anti-social behaviour as an important priority. Comments made included:

"Priorities should be making Tamworth a safe place with low anti social behaviour."

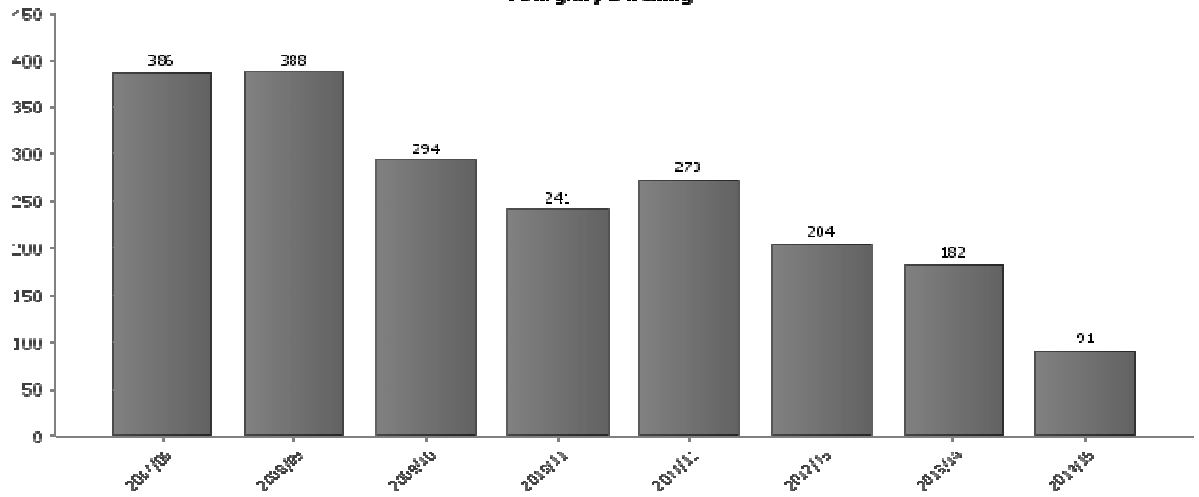
"Tamworth is not a great place to live for older people, no where to go at night and be safe."

Despite the falling crime statistics in Tamworth, which the performance indicators show, tackling the fear of crime is still an issue. The latest Feeling the Difference survey in November 2013 revealed that 16% of those interviewed were fearful of being a victim of crime. The highest in Staffordshire was 22.5% and the lowest 5.3%.

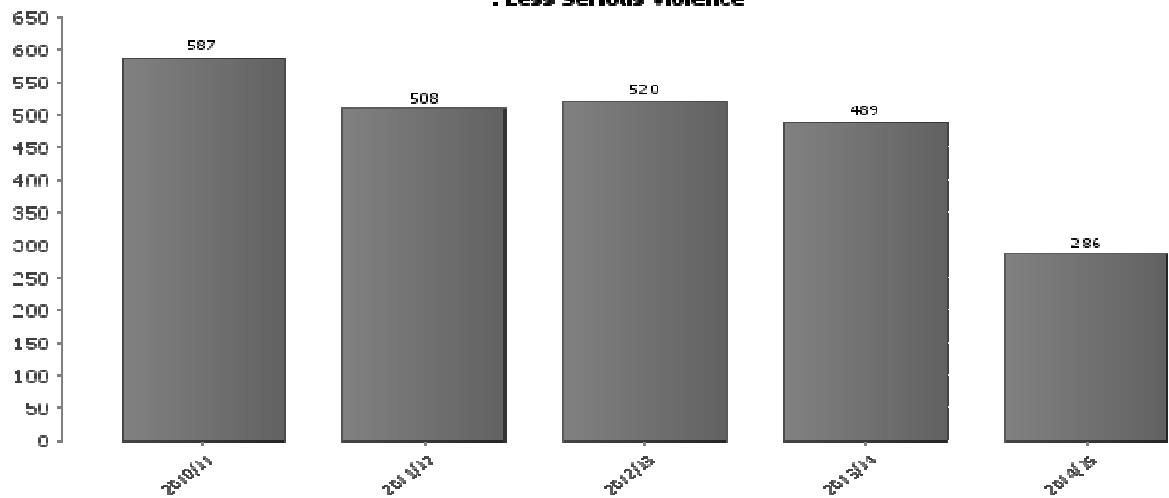
. Incidents of Anti-Social Behaviour

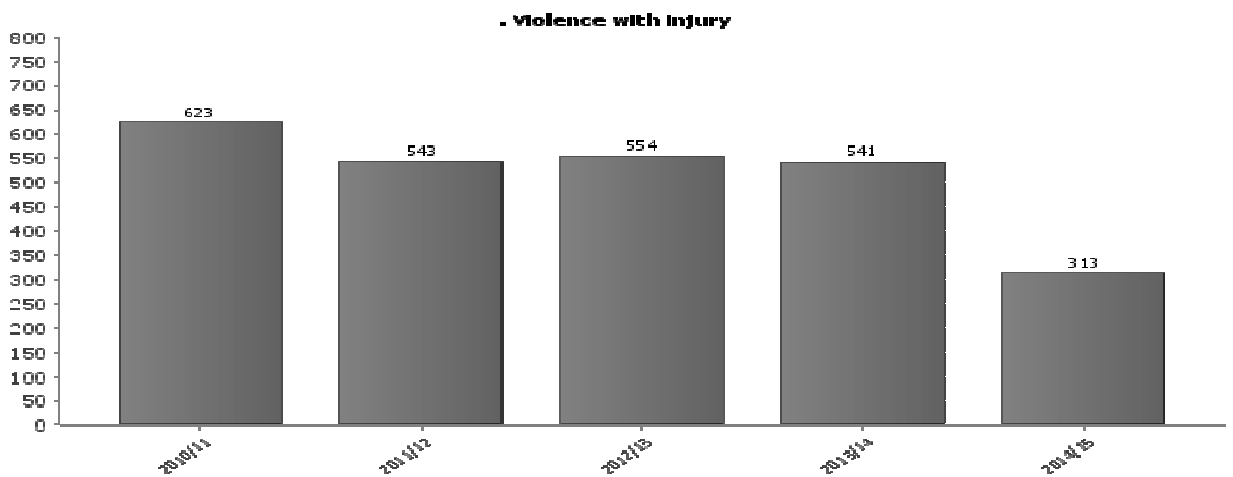
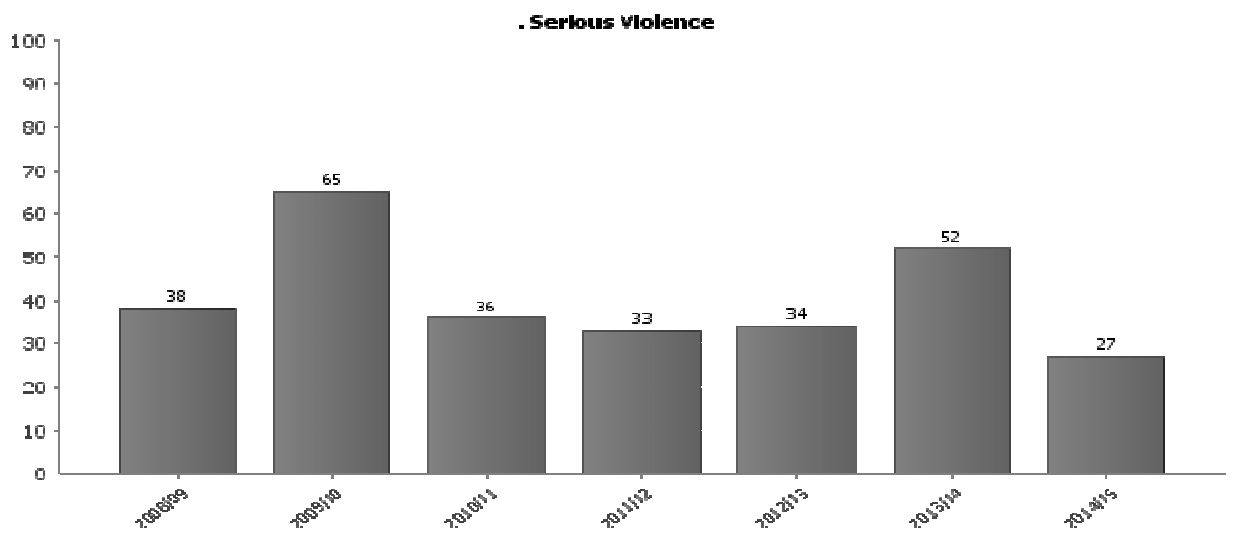
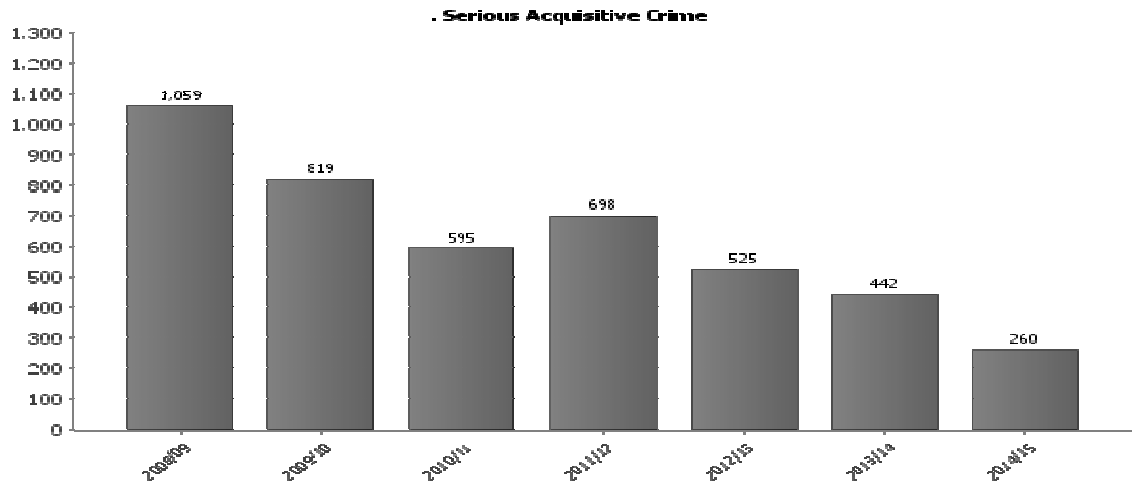


. Burglary Dwelling



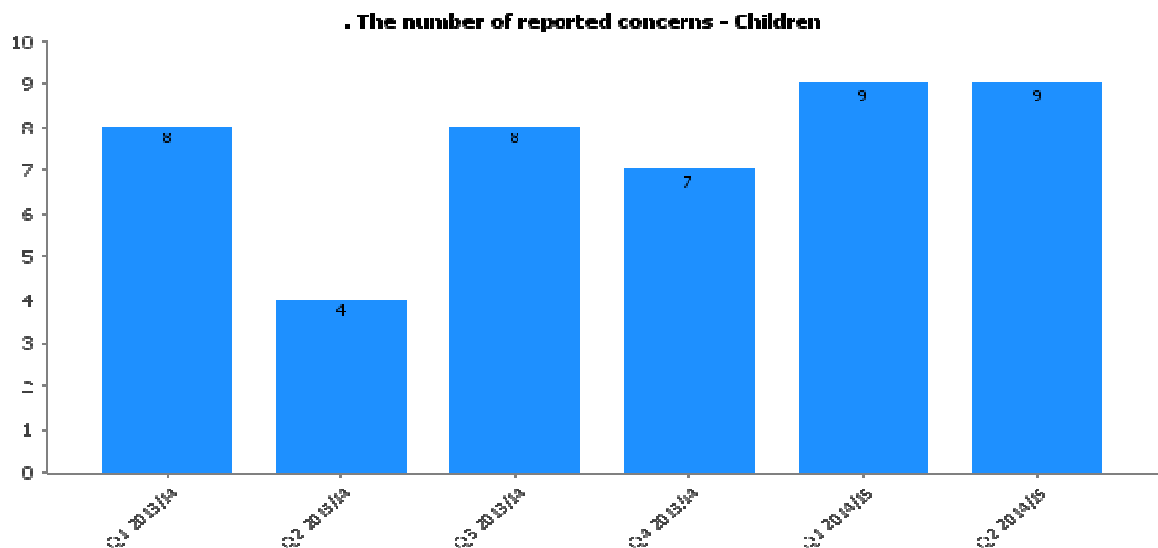
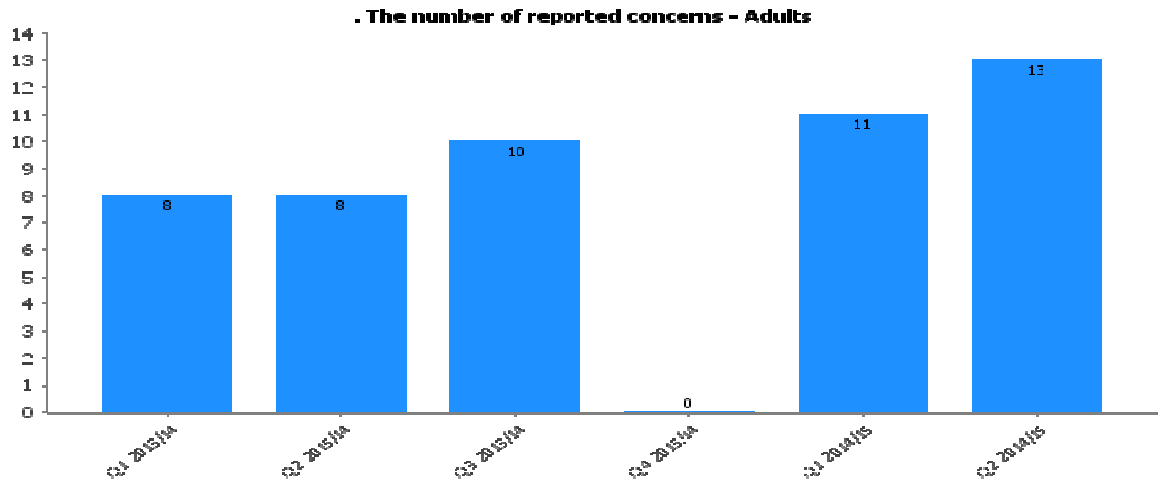
. Less Serious Violence





Creating an integrated approach to protecting those most vulnerable in our local Communities

This objective was regarded as important by 74% of people in the 2015/16 budget consultation exercise.



At the Tamworth Listens Question Time Event in November 2014, two questions were asked on the theme of safer communities. These are listed below and the responses are contained at Appendix A.

Can cameras be installed in play areas to check for crime?

What is being done to stop vehicles parking on footways especially near/at school entrances?