

# *Tamworth* Borough Council

Tamworth Borough Councils Homelessness Strategy Review and Evidence Base

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## **1. Introduction**

Homelessness has a detrimental effect on individuals, families and communities. It can be linked to alcohol and drug abuse, poor physical and mental health, crime and anti-social behaviour, poor educational attainment, debt, unemployment and the breakdown of support networks. Tackling homelessness can be costly when compared to the costs associated with proactively seeking to prevent homelessness in the first place.

Section 1 of the Homelessness Act 2002 requires all local authorities to carry out a review of homelessness and homeless services within their area and keep their strategies under review. Section 2 of the same act prescribes the considerations that Local Authorities should undertake in conducting a review of homelessness and the purpose of the review in terms of informing a future homelessness prevention strategy. Tamworth Borough Council's current homelessness strategy expired recently and to address this requirement this review paper considers the most up to date evidence to determine if the priorities contained within the expired strategy remain the same or if they require revision. Following the completion of this review the Council intends to produce and implement a revised 4-year homelessness strategy, as a complementary document to the Councils Healthier Housing Strategy which directly contributes to the delivery of the outcomes contained within this and which also incorporates health activity. Alongside this will be a comprehensive and detailed action plan which will be reviewed annually and a priority for spend plan which will set out where money will be allocated to prevent homelessness.

## **2. What is Homelessness?**

Homelessness is defined within the Homelessness Code of Guidance as:

*"... somebody is statutorily homeless if they do not have a accommodation that they have a legal right to occupy, which is accessible and physically available to them and which it would be reasonable for them to continue to live in ... "*

For the purposes of this review and when the strategy is developed the term homelessness will take this definition in the guidance into consideration and will be used as a broad concept that includes a number of different categories, ranging from rough sleepers to those temporarily sheltered in homeless hostels, to hidden groups like 'sofa surfers', who are seeking temporary accommodation from friends and

families following the loss of their own lodging, to those in overcrowded and unsuitable accommodation. Where a specific group is being considered, for example Rough Sleepers, this will be made explicit.

### **3. Strategic Context**

#### **3.1 National**

Since 2002, the government has made homelessness prevention a priority, by providing increased funding to tackle homelessness, setting challenging targets for the prevention of homelessness, and placing requirements on local councils to produce homelessness strategies. The 2002 Homelessness Act extended the definition of priority need to include new groups of vulnerable people, whilst outlining the requirements placed upon local authorities to produce homelessness strategies informed by a review of performance, current service provision and estimated future need. The Act stated that the focus of these strategies was to be on preventative measures, as well as emphasising the importance of offering advice to all people in housing need.

The focus of services has remained on the prevention of homelessness and the Government has continued to supplement Local Authority resources, although in the current climate of Government budgets being cut the future of this funding is uncertain. Until now however, this and more recent initiatives such as the Governments No Second Night Out Agenda and the publication of Making Every Contact Count, which was billed as the Governments Homelessness Prevention Strategy has ensured the delivery of specific programmes to allow authorities to deliver effective homelessness services, prevent homelessness, reduce the use of Temporary Accommodation and end the worst manifestations of homelessness such as families living in Bed and Breakfast Accommodation and Rough Sleeping.

#### **3.2 No Second Night Out and Making Every Contact Count**

The former Coalition Government in 2010 produced two key reports that directly link to Homelessness, “Vision to End Rough Sleeping, No Second Night Out” and “Making Every Contact Count”, which was billed as the Government’s Homelessness Prevention Strategy.

##### **3.2.1 Vision to End Rough Sleeping, No Second Night Out**

The previous Government set up a cross governmental working group to address homelessness issues, bringing together Ministers from across 8 Government

Departments recognising that homelessness is not just about housing. The working group is formed from Ministers from:

- Department for Communities and Local Government – Housing and homelessness
- Ministry of Defence – The welfare of veterans
- Department for Business, Innovation and Skills – Adult skills
- Department of Health – Health and care services
- Department for Work and Pensions – Benefits
- Ministry of Justice – Criminal justice
- Home Office – Crime prevention
- Department for Education – Children and youth services

The aim of the group was to prevent and reduce homelessness and it published its first report in July 2011 “Vision to end Rough Sleeping, No Second Night Out” which sets out 6 commitments to try and end Rough Sleeping:

- Helping people off the streets
- Helping people access healthcare
- Helping people into work
- Reducing bureaucratic burdens
- Increasing local control over investment in services
- Devolving responsibility for tackling homelessness

The report focuses on single homeless without a priority need, including those who are living on the streets and those who are at greatest risk of rough sleeping. The report recognised a need to tackle the issues that may have led to the homelessness situation.

No Second Night Out was the key to making this a success – an initiative piloted in London and aims to ensure that those that find themselves sleeping rough are helped off the streets and do not sleep out for a second night.

The report also made recommendations that all Local Authorities build on their existing services to adopt a gold standard approach which meets the No Second Night Out principles of:

- New Rough Sleepers being identified and helped off the streets so that they do not continue to Rough Sleep
- Members of the public being able to report Rough Sleepers
- Rough Sleepers should be able to access services where they can have their needs assessed and can receive advice on their housing options
- Rough Sleepers can access emergency accommodation and other services such as healthcare
- That Rough Sleepers are reconnected where possible and where there is not a good reason why they are unable to return

Link to the Government report “Vision to End Rough Sleeping – No Second Night Out”:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/6261/1939099.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/6261/1939099.pdf)

As part of the West Midlands Regional Homelessness Forum Tamworth Borough Council signed up to a No Second Night Out model across the West Midlands. This can be found at Appendix 1

### **3.2.2 Making Every Contact Count**

The Ministerial Working Group then published Making Every Contact Count – billed as the Government’s Homelessness Prevention Strategy which stated there is no place for homelessness in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century and sets out what the previous Government planned to ensure that “everyone who is at risk of homelessness gets help at the earliest possible stage to prevent them from losing their home”

In the foreword to the report former Housing Minister Grant Shapps set out the vision:

*“... the vision of this report is simple, but bold. There is no place for homelessness in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. The key to delivering that vision is prevention – agencies working together to support those at risk of homelessness”*

By highlighting the triggers for homelessness and identifying that there are particular groups at higher risk of homelessness the report placed emphasis on working in an integrated way at a local level in keeping with the fundamental premise that homelessness prevention is everyone’s responsibility.



The report announced resources which focus on the groups highlighted as being most at risk and a number of agencies are named as recipients of funding and the lead agency for delivering initiatives within the strategy. The report introduced the concept of payment by results.

The report summarises:

- The roll out of No Second Night Out (see appendix 1)
- £20m Homelessness Transition Fund which was administered through voluntary sector providers – Brighter Futures received a share of this and currently provides Tamworth Rough Sleeping Outreach service.

This link provides further information about the outreach service:

[http://www.brighter-futures.org.uk/?/street\\_services/scheme/rough\\_sleepers\\_team](http://www.brighter-futures.org.uk/?/street_services/scheme/rough_sleepers_team)

- £10.8m administered by Crisis to support the voluntary sector to deliver access to the Private Rented Sector
- £18.5m to groups of Local Authorities to develop prevention services for single homeless people
- £20m for local housing authorities for preventing repossessions
- Development of a national rough sleeper reporting line

For further information about the rough sleeper reporting line please see the following link:

<http://www.streetlink.org.uk/>

- Funded a report on how hospital admission and discharge could be improved for homeless people Funded a pilot for improving outcomes for homeless people with co-existing mental health and substance misuse needs.

The full report is available here:

[http://homeless.org.uk/sites/default/files/attached-downloads/HOSPITAL\\_ADMISSION\\_AND\\_DISCHARGE\\_REPORTdoc.pdf](http://homeless.org.uk/sites/default/files/attached-downloads/HOSPITAL_ADMISSION_AND_DISCHARGE_REPORTdoc.pdf)

The previous Government set out ten challenges (Gold Standard) for Local Authorities which it believed are necessary to achieve its vision, and suggest it is the responsibility of the Local Authority to make these work locally. These are

- Adopt a corporate commitment to prevent homelessness which has buy in across all Local Authority Services
- Have a Homelessness Strategy which sets out a proactive approach to preventing homelessness and is reviewed annually to be responsive to emerging needs
- Work differently with partners within the Public Sector, but also in the private and voluntary and community sectors to achieve outcomes.
- Adopt a No Second Night Out model or an effective local alternative
- Actively engage in preventing mortgage repossession including through the Mortgage Rescue Scheme
- Housing Pathways with Commissioners considering different household groups, and identify the barriers to these being achieved
- Ensure that there is a housing options prevention service that is available to all clients and provides written advice
- Develop a suitable private rented sector offer for all client groups, including advice and support to both client and the landlord
- Not place any young person aged 16 or 17 in Bed and Breakfast Accommodation
- Not place any families in Bed and Breakfast accommodation unless it is an emergency and then for no longer than 6 weeks

Link to the report “Making Every Contact Count”

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/7597/200459.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/7597/200459.pdf)

### **3.3. The cost of Homelessness**

A paper produced by the Department for Communities and Local Government (CLG) entitled “Evidence review of the costs of homelessness” produced in August 2012 estimates that homelessness costs the Government between £24,000 and £30,000 gross per person (although the net cost will be lower) This figure is derived from a number of studies previously undertaken.

The paper then goes on to look at a break down of where the costs come from across all Government Departments:

Department for Works and Pensions: Costs are likely to increase as a result of benefits payments, employment programmes, associated administrations costs and payments to Local Authorities for administering Housing Benefit

Department of Health: Health problems, in particular mental health, substance misuse and alcohol dependency are more prevalent amongst the homeless population, especially rough sleepers. The paper states however that there is a lack of evidence of the numbers of homeless people engaging with health services but case study evidence suggests the cost to public services of people with multiple needs is considerable.

Ministry of Justice: Research suggests that homelessness and offending behaviour are closely linked and mutually perpetuating. Costs to the criminal justice system and policing may be significant – for example costs for a drug conviction are estimated at around £16,000

Local Authorities: Expenditure on homelessness in 2010 – 2011 totalled almost £345m with nearly 1/3 of this being spent on temporary accommodation, £70m on prevention and the rest on the administration of homelessness functions.

Link to the report Evidence Review of the Costs of Homelessness:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/7596/200485.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/7596/200485.pdf)

Until recently money to deliver Homelessness Prevention activity has come directly to local authorities from Central Government in the form of a grant. However the Coalition Government rolled this funding into the Business Rate Retention Scheme, which is a change in the way services are funded, not a change in the grant. Local authorities are being encouraged to direct this Homeless Prevention money at supporting development of the Gold Standard homelessness prevention service. From 2020 Councils will get to keep their Business Rates and Homelessness will be funded from this

Central Government confirmed continued investment into preventing homelessness until 2016. This gives Tamworth Borough Council the financial certainty required to commission and deliver essential homelessness prevention services. In line with this review and the development of the action plan there is a spend plan attached to this review highlighting priority areas for spending to deliver homelessness prevention and improving health outcomes for homeless people.

### **3.4. Localism Act**

The Localism Act passed in 2011 set out the coalition Government's localism agenda with major changes to social housing regulation and tenure, planning and the introduction of new community rights.

For housing the main changes implemented under this Act were:

- The abolition of the Tenant Services Authority (TSA) and its regulatory function which was subsumed by the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA).
- Changes in the way council house finance is delivered.
- Local Authorities can now offer new tenants 'flexible tenure' (fixed term secure tenancies) rather than traditional 'lifetime' tenancies. The Act also makes a number of changes to facilitate the use of fixed-term tenancies by social landlords. Authorities also had an obligation placed on them to produce a Tenancy Strategy.
- Statutory succession rights are reduced (for new tenants only) but it is now possible to confer additional succession rights under the tenancy agreement.
- There is now a single Ombudsman for all social housing. Tenants will be able to take complaints to a 'designated person' (e.g. Councillor or MP) but will also be able to go direct to the Ombudsman

The key changes to homelessness legislation is contained within sections 148 and 149 of the Localism Act 2011, with these commencing on 9 November 2012 alongside a new statutory suitability order and supplementary statutory guidance and related to the Council now being able to discharge its homeless duty into the private rented sector.

Under previous legislation, people who become homeless were able to refuse offers of accommodation in the private rented sector, and wait until a social-rented home

became available. The provisions of the Act mean that this is no longer the case and a Local Authority can discharge its duty by making a reasonable offer of accommodation in the private rented sector.

### **3.5. Welfare reforms**

As well as introducing the Localism Act to address the deficit they introduced a number of reforms to the welfare system. The changes made were:

#### **3.5.1 Shared Accommodation Rate**

The age threshold for the shared accommodation rate of Local Housing Allowance (LHA) was increased from 25 to 35 years of age. This change applies to private tenants only. This means that single claimants up to the age of 35 will have their benefit based on LHA for a room in a shared property (£66.04 per week or £286.17 per month) rather than LHA for a self contained one bedroom property (£90.00 per week or £390.00 per month). This change has applied to all new claimants since the 1st January 2012. Existing claimants were then moved onto the shared room rate at the next anniversary of their benefit claim. Those aged 18-35 can continue to occupy larger properties but if they receive LHA there will be an expectation that the difference will be paid by the tenant.

#### **3.5.2 Tax Credits**

Changes were made to the way Tax Credits were assessed from April 2012, so that credit is withdrawn faster as income rises. Working Tax Credit (WTC) is no longer available to people aged 50+ starting work of 16 hours or more. Working hours for couples with children will be increased. Most couples must work at least 24 hours a week between them, with one working at least 16 hours to qualify for WTC. There are also further payments available if a parent or child has a disability and whether a parent is self employed.

#### **3.5.3 Council Tax Benefit (CTB) replaced with localised Council Tax Support schemes**

Councils were required to put in place local Council Tax Support Schemes. Government funding for the schemes were cut by 10% nationally. The Government has designed a national scheme for pensioners and councils will developed their own local scheme for working age claimants. This has been in place at Tamworth

Borough Council since April 2013 and any Council Tax Benefit Claimant will be expected to make a contribution to their Council Tax.

#### **3.5.4 Under-occupation rule in the social rented sector (Commonly known as the “Bedroom Tax”)**

Restrictions were applied to council and housing association tenants living in houses larger than they need. A 14% reduction applies if tenants are under-occupying by 1 bedroom and a 25% reduction applies if they are under occupying by 2 or more bedrooms. This affects people of working age who receive help to pay their rent and begun in April 2013. There were 559 households living in Tamworth Borough Council accommodation affected by this change when it was introduced. As of April 2015 there were 349 claimants still affected by the under occupancy charge, and of these 165 were in arrears with their rent payments. (47% of those affected)

#### **3.5.5 Benefit cap introduced**

Again from April 2013 there has been a cap on the total amount of benefit a working age household can receive. Benefit levels have been capped at the level of the average working family income after tax which is £500 a week for families and £350 a week for single people. (The exceptions being those households that include a war widow, a Disability Living Allowance claimant or a Working Tax Credit claimant). The cap is to be applied by local councils first of all, with councils required to reduce Housing Benefit payments until the cap is reached.

#### **3.5.6 Social fund scheme transferred to Local Authorities**

Funding for Crisis Loans and Community Care grants has now been transferred to Staffordshire County Council who has put in place its own local scheme for the County. There is no duty for a council to provide a local welfare scheme.

More detailed information about the Staffordshire Scheme is available here

[http://www.staffordbc.gov.uk/live/images/cme\\_resources/Users/Systems%20Maintenance/Social-fund-leaflet180413.pdf](http://www.staffordbc.gov.uk/live/images/cme_resources/Users/Systems%20Maintenance/Social-fund-leaflet180413.pdf)

#### **3.5.7 Disability Living Allowance (DLA) to be replaced**

DLA is being replaced with a new benefit called Personal Independent Payment (PIP). DLA will only be available to children under the age of 16. PIP payments have been rolled out across the West Midlands during 2015. All current claimants will be re-assessed under new criteria before receiving their new PIP payment.

### **3.5.8 Local Housing Allowance rates up rated by Consumer Price Index (CPI)**

From April 2013 LHA rates changed to annual up-rating, using whichever is lower of the CPI inflation rate or the actual increase in rents used to up-rate LHA in the private rented sector. This replaced the monthly up-rating based on local rents.

### **3.5.9 Introduction of Universal Credit**

Universal Credit is the new single benefit which is replacing Housing Benefit, Income Support, Income Related Job Seekers Allowance, Income Based Employment and Support Allowance and Tax Credit. Claims are made online and payment will normally be a single household payment, including the housing costs, paid monthly in arrears directly to the claimant. All new claims from October 2013 have been a claim for Universal Credit with all other claims being migrated to Universal Credit over a 4-year period, although this has been delayed. Rollout of Universal Credit began in Tamworth during 2015 for all new claimants.

### **3.5.10 Modified Pension Credit**

The Pension Service has taken over assessing Housing Benefit for people of pension credit age and Housing Benefit will become part of Pension Credit, the dates for this to happen have yet to be published by the government, but may be rolled out with the introduction of universal credit, which began in Tamworth in 2015.

### **3.5.11 Discretionary Housing Payments**

Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP) has been paid by Central Government to Local Authorities for many years, to allow them to award money, in addition to benefits, towards housing costs. Once the money is spent then there is no more allocated to the authority until the next year and where money is not spent, unspent funds have to be returned to Central Government at the end of the year.

Generally DHP is used to assist with rental costs but its use is discretionary and can also be used for wider costs such as:

- Cash Deposits
- Rent in Advance
- Moving costs

To assist claimants through the transitional period of welfare reforms central Government funding towards DHPs has been increased from £20 million per year up to £165 million for 2013/14, and £135 million for 2014/15 nationally.

In 2014/15 Tamworth Borough Council awarded £111084 in Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP) the budget for DHP payments was £111054.

*Table 1 – DHP Awards*

Reason for Award	Number of Award	Cost (£)
Benefit Cap	2	393.70
Removal of Spare Room Subsidy	201	67014.94
LHA Restriction	55	15597.85
Combination of Reforms	3	1519.17
No Impact	92	28558.34
<b>Total</b>	<b>353</b>	<b>111084.00</b>

Source – Tamworth Borough Council Benefits Department 3/2/15

Tamworth Borough Councils Discretionary Housing Payments Policy:

<http://democracy.tamworth.gov.uk:9071/documents/s5960/Enc.%202%20for%20Welfare%20Benefit%20Reform%20Discretionary%20Payments.pdf>

Guidance for use of DHP and best practice guide from the Department for Works and Pensions (DWP)

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/184207/discretionary-housing-payments-guide.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/184207/discretionary-housing-payments-guide.pdf)

### **3.5.12 Current Government Proposals**

The recently elected conservative government proposals that may have an impact on housing and homelessness include:

- Cutting benefits for under 21 year olds, including automatic entitlement to Housing Benefit for under 21s.



- Extending Right to Buy to Registered Provider's Housing stock.
- The devolution of power from Westminster and to the Regions, in this region, this is the West Midlands Combined Authority.
- The closure of the Independent Living Fund for disabled people.  
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-33307821>
- Continued role out of Universal Credit.
- Extending the Help to Buy scheme, and the new Help to Buy ISA.
- Construction of 200,000 started homes sold at 20% below the asking price for first time buyers under the age of 40.
- Offering 10,000 homes to rent below market rent to allow households to have the opportunity to save for a deposit for up to 7 years.
- The government have also committed to save an extra £12 billion from the Welfare Budget.
- Household benefits capped at £23,000

#### **4. Legal Context**

The legislation that covers Tamworth Borough Councils main duties in respect of Homelessness is Part VII of the 1996 Housing Act (as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002). Prior to its enactment, all households that were accepted as homeless had the right to permanent housing. Following the legislative changes in 1997, Councils were placed under a duty to temporarily accommodate homeless households that they deemed to be in "priority need". Access to permanent social housing is now administered on a basis of "reasonable preference" via the choice based lettings scheme (as per Part VI of the Housing Act 1996)<sup>1</sup>. Amendments in the Homelessness Act 2002 extended the "priority need" groups to include:

- 16 and 17 year olds (except relevant children i.e. those who Social Services have a responsibility under the Children (leaving care) Act 2000)
- people who are considered vulnerable as a result of fleeing violence (or threats of violence)
- people who are vulnerable as a result of spending time in the armed forces, serving time in prison or a care background.

Should the Council find an applicant unintentionally homeless, eligible for assistance with a priority need for accommodation, the Council has a duty under section 190 (2) to:

- Ensure that accommodation is available for the applicants occupation for such period as it considers will give the applicant a reasonable opportunity to secure accommodation
- Provide the applicant, or secure that the applicant is provided with, advice and assistance in any attempts they may make to ensure accommodation becomes available for their occupation

Where the applicant is deemed to be intentionally homeless, eligible for assistance and does not have a priority need, the Council has a duty under section 190 (3) to provide advice and assistance in any attempts by the applicant to secure accommodation for their occupation.

## **5. Regional Context**

### **5.1 The West Midlands Regional Homelessness Forum**

The West Midlands Homelessness Forum is a multi-agency forum that has a number of key tasks:

- Supporting sub-regional activity on homelessness
- Promoting partnership working across the region and sub-regions
- Informing practice across the region
- Promoting prevention of homelessness across the region

Tamworth Borough Council participates in this forum along with other West Midlands Local Authorities, Voluntary Sector Organisations, Housing Providers, key partners such as National Offender Management Service (NOMS) and NACRO with its key tasks being to help local agencies and partnerships make a positive difference for people who are at risk of homelessness or who are already homeless, which is done by supporting joint working, sharing good practice and by influencing the direction of policy and investment at a regional level.

Tamworth Borough Council as part of the Forum has signed up to a West Midlands wide commitment to No Second Night Out (Attached as Appendix 1) which sets out what the Council is doing to achieve the Gold Standard commitment to Adopt a No Second Night Out model or an effective local alternative.

The West Midlands Regional Homelessness Forum has its own website which can be found here

<http://www.wmrhf.org.uk/index.asp?ID=1>

Funding was given to support the forum until 2016. However due to the organisation who provide administrative support no longer being available the future of the Forum is currently open to discussion.

## **5.2 What is happening in Staffordshire?**

### **5.2.1 Communities and Local Government Single Homelessness Funding**

Tamworth Borough Council along with all of the other authorities in Staffordshire, Shropshire and Telford and Wrekin were awarded £560k across the geographical area to tackle Single Homelessness and the No Second Night Out Agenda in 2015.

An action plan was drawn up, by the Shropshire, Staffordshire Housing Partnership, following a needs analysis across the area, based on evidence which identified 5 priority areas of action. The outcomes that were identified were:

- Increase access to the private rented sector for all single homeless people (18 to 35)
- Increase access to the private rented sector for single homeless with more complex needs
- Increase access to accommodation and support for offenders.
- Reduce numbers of rough sleepers and implement NSNO across the partnership areas
- Fewer young people are homeless or at risk of homelessness as a result of parental eviction/family and friends no longer willing to accommodate
- Reduce the risk of vulnerable households becoming homeless as a result of the introduction of Universal Credit and other welfare reforms.
- Improve quality of advice and information given to households approaching for housing advice; ensure that all LA partners are offering a minimum standard of advice including written advice in plain English.

To date a research report on the number of rough sleepers was undertaken by Midland Heart, which informed the commissioning of a Rough Sleepers Outreach Service for the County. This was initially run as a pilot by Brighter Futures.

Following the success of the pilot, further funding was sought and a successful Homeless Transition Fund Bid by Brighter Futures secured funding to continue this service for 12 months and to allow this to continue beyond this period the partnership match funded the HTF bid to allow the service to continue until March 2016.

Additionally linked to improving access to the private rented sector, following a procurement exercise, Derwentio Housing were chosen to work with private sector landlords across South Staffordshire to lease properties for three years and house single 18 – 35 year olds with low or no support needs. Although the contract with the partnership has ended Derwentio have 3 properties leased in the area providing shared accommodation in Tamworth equating to 12 bed spaces, which Tamworth Borough Council can refer into.

### **5.2.2 Staffordshire Strategies**

As well as activity related to funding there are a number of strategies developed by Staffordshire County Council which are implemented across the region and will have an impact on housing and homelessness in Tamworth.

#### **The Staffordshire Flexi Care Housing Strategy 2010-2015**

This strategy aims to provide the direction and information to help transform the opportunities for housing and care in Staffordshire and identifies the number of flexi-care or extra care units that are required in each district to meet current and future needs and how working effectively in partnership the County hope to achieve this.

The strategy suggests an expected rise in all areas of the County in the older population with Tamworth seeing the biggest increase, with half of those living alone and many having a long term life limiting illness and suggests by 2030 Tamworth will require 823 units of flexi care housing.

The link to this Strategy can be found here:

<http://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/Resources/Documents/s/st/StaffsFCHStrategy20102015v101.pdf>

### **The 2012 – 2016 Staffordshire Strategy for Tackling Domestic Abuse**

Breaking the Cycle is Staffordshire's first Domestic Abuse Strategy and provides a context and sets out how Staffordshire's Safer and Stronger Communities Strategy Group intends to tackle domestic abuse in Staffordshire. Each of agencies involved in the Strategy Group has nominated a 'champion' whose responsibility it will be to ensure that their organisation is doing all it can to reduce the frequency and impact of domestic abuse.

The link to this strategy and its action plan can be found here:

<http://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/community/communitysafety/Documents/Breaking-the-Cycle---Staffs-Domestic-Abuse-Strategy-2012-16.pdf>

### **The 2012-2015 Staffordshire Housing Support and Independence Strategy**

The Staffordshire Housing Support and Independence Strategy sets out the framework for commissioning activity by Staffordshire County Council in relation to housing support and the enablement of individuals to remain independent for as long as possible

This strategy can be found here:

<http://www.staffsmoorlands.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/pages/Staffs%20Housing%20Support%20and%20IndependenceStrategy-v1%202.pdf>

## **6. Local Context**

### **6.1 The Tamworth Strategic Partnership**

The Tamworth Strategic Partnership (TSP) is an umbrella partnership that brings together key local agencies from the public, private, voluntary and community sectors to address the complex challenges needed to improve the quality of life for the communities of Tamworth. The partnership provides a platform to discuss debate and progress issues that will make a difference to the area.

The partnership has been structured to ensure that it is fit for purpose to deliver on Tamworth Borough Councils vision and priorities for Tamworth

**The Vision**

“One Tamworth (the people), Perfectly Placed (the place)”

Table 2 shows how this strategy addresses the TSP priorities

*Table 2 – How the Councils Homelessness Strategy will address the TSP Priorities*

TSP Priority	How this Strategy will address these priorities
A safe environment in which local people can reach their full potential and live longer healthier lives	By offering a preventative approach to homelessness by providing a service that is proactive and responsive to individuals needs.
A sustainable and thriving local economy, a more aspirational and competitive place to do business	The prevention of homelessness will enable individuals to contribute to the local economy.

Webpage link giving more information on the TSP:

<http://www.tamworth.gov.uk/tamworth-strategic-partnership>

## **6.2 Tamworth Borough Councils Healthier Housing Strategy**

Tamworth Borough Councils Healthier Housing Strategy was developed in 2011 after a report produced by the Health Inequalities National Support Team following a visit to Tamworth suggested there was some advantage to developing a joint Housing and Health Strategy. Specifically contained within this strategy are priorities relating to homelessness. This strategy is currently under review and a new Strategy is due for 2016.

The new Homelessness Strategy will be an appendix to the existing Healthier Housing Strategy, as well as the new one and will sit alongside, and give regard to the Councils Tenancy Strategy and will complement and expand on the actions contained with the Healthier Housing Strategy and will directly work to meet the priorities contained within this current Strategy which are:

### **There are suitable homes for everyone (Access)**

- There is a greater choice of homes

- Households are able to move to a quality affordable home
- People are able to afford a wider range of housing options

**Homes are healthy, warm and safe (Aspects)**

- Homes in all tenures will be safe, warm and well – maintained
- People take responsibility for improvements in the quality of their home

**People are able to maintain and independent and healthy lifestyle (Individual Behaviour)**

- There is a reduction in all forms of homelessness
- Vulnerable people are supported to live independently
- People are able to make informed decisions to improve their housing circumstances

**Neighbourhood environments enable safer and healthier communities (Neighbourhoods)**

- Homes of all tenures are in well designed and managed neighbourhoods
- People and communities are able to take control and responsibility for neighbourhoods

Table 3 shows how this strategy will address the priorities contained within the Councils Healthier Housing Strategy

*Table 3 – The Councils Healthier Housing Strategy and how the Homelessness Strategy will address these*

Healthier Housing Strategy key priorities	How this Strategy addresses these issues
There are suitable home for everyone.	By providing a comprehensive range of advice and assistance to enable people to move in to decent and affordable homes.
Homes are healthy warm and safe.	By tackling homelessness and preventing it by working with partners to address issues where homes may not be safe
People are able to maintain and independent lifestyle.	By providing a comprehensive and robust housing solutions service which helps prevent homelessness, supports people to live independently, and make informed decisions to improve housing

	circumstances.
Neighbourhood environments enable safer and healthier communities.	By empowering people to take control and responsibility for their neighbourhood.

Tamworth Borough Councils Healthier Housing Strategy can be found here:

[http://www.tamworth.gov.uk/sites/default/files/housing\\_docs/Healthier\\_Housing\\_Strategy.pdf](http://www.tamworth.gov.uk/sites/default/files/housing_docs/Healthier_Housing_Strategy.pdf)

The healthier housing strategy is currently under review and is due to be updated.

### 6.3 Tenancy Strategy and Allocations Schemes

Section 153 of the Localism Act which came into force in June 2012 prescribes the relationship between schemes and strategies that Local Authorities must have regard to in developing their homelessness strategies.

#### 153 Relationship between schemes and strategies

In section 3 of the Homelessness Act 2002 (homelessness strategy) after subsection 7 insert –

“(7A) in formulating or modifying a homelessness strategy, a local authority in England shall have regard to –

- (a) its current allocation scheme under section 166A of the Housing Act 1996
- (b) its current Tenancy Strategy under section 150 of the Localism Act 2011, and
- (c) in the case of an authority that is a London Borough Council, the current London Housing Strategy”

This section enshrines in legislation the relationship between the Local Authority Homelessness Strategy, the Allocations Policy and the Tenancy Strategy.

Tamworth Borough Council has been offering flexible fixed term tenancies since 1<sup>st</sup> April 2013. They are only given to new tenants accessing council accommodation. Those moving in to sheltered accommodation and those in adapted properties will continue to sign secure tenancies.

Flexible fixed term tenancies will be reviewed every five years. Within the five year if a families circumstances have changed they may be expected to leave social housing and move in to the private rented sector or affordable homeownership. The



review process is lengthy at least six months and tenants will be supported in to alternative accommodation during this time. This is so that social housing is made available for those families and individuals in greatest need. For those families where their circumstances have not changed they will be granted a further five years on their tenancy.

Tamworth Borough Councils Tenancy Strategy recognises that there is a requirement for the Council to work with Registered Providers in the Borough to prevent homelessness and states in its Tenancy Strategy:

*“Where Fixed Term Tenancies are used the Council would expect to see these re-issued at the end of the term unless there is a significant change of circumstances. The Council would again like the opportunity to work with Registered Providers to establish how this will be managed and the criteria used to allow its Housing Solutions Service to prepare for the anticipated changes. This approach should also help mitigate any health risks associated with uncertainty of tenure.”*

Tamworth Borough Councils Tenancy Strategy can be found here:

[http://www.tamworth.gov.uk/sites/default/files/housing\\_docs/Tenancy\\_Strategy.doc](http://www.tamworth.gov.uk/sites/default/files/housing_docs/Tenancy_Strategy.doc)

Under the Localism Act Registered Providers were also required to publish Tenancy Policies. The following are a summary of main points of the policies of the 3 largest Registered Providers who own and manage properties in Tamworth:

## 6.4 Registered Providers Lettings Plans

### 6.4.1 Midland Heart

All of Midland Heart existing tenants will remain on their current tenancy types. However new tenants will be offered one of the following tenancy types.

*Table 4 – Tenancies to be offered by Midland Heart*

Tenancy Type	Who this will be offered to
Licence Agreement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Customers who do not have exclusive occupation of the property. This usually includes:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Customers in emergency hostel accommodation</li> <li>○ Customers using garages or parking spaces</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

Tenancy Type	Who this will be offered to
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Service Occupiers in Tied Accommodation who have service occupancy agreements</li> </ul>
Assured Shorthold Tenancy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Customers living in a property where Midland Heart is the leaseholder</li> <li>● Customers living in intermediate rented properties</li> <li>● Customers living in rent to homebuy properties who have not purchased all or part of the property</li> <li>● Customers living in market rented properties</li> <li>● Customers in supported housing</li> <li>● Customers with limited leave to remain in the UK</li> </ul>
Starter Tenancy (Assured Shorthold Tenancy - leading to Assured Non Shorthold)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● New customers who directly before becoming a Midland Heart tenant did not hold a social housing tenancy; <b>and</b></li> <li>● (Only until the TSA National Standard on Tenure is amended to allow the use of fixed term tenancies as Midland Heart sees appropriate, expected to be April 2012) they are moving into a property that has not been designated an affordable rent property</li> </ul> <p>When the TSA National Standard on Tenure is amended to allow the use of Fixed Term Tenancies as Midland Heart sees appropriate, expected to be April 2012, this form of tenancy will not be used except where customers are moving into a Midland Heart owned property where the need for that property is unlikely to change in the future -this will include sheltered and extra care accommodation</p>
Fixed Term Starter Tenancy (Assured Shorthold Tenancy - leading to Fixed Term)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● New customers who directly before becoming a Midland Heart tenant did not hold a social housing tenancy; <b>and</b></li> <li>● (Only until the TSA National Standard on Tenure is amended to allow the use of fixed term tenancies as Midland Heart sees appropriate, expected to be April 2012) they are moving into a property that has been allocated an affordable rent property; <b>and</b></li> </ul> <p>When the TSA National Standard on Tenure is amended to allow the use of Fixed Term Tenancies as Midland Heart sees appropriate, expected to be April 2012, this form of tenancy will used for all new customers who directly before becoming a Midland Heart tenant did not hold a social housing tenancy <b>and</b> one of the other forms of agreement are not relevant</p>
Mixed Use Business Tenancy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Customers in designated live/work accommodation</li> </ul>

Tenancy Type	Who this will be offered to
Assured Non Shorthold Tenancy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Existing Midland Heart customers with an Assured Non-Shorthold Tenancy that are transferring to another Midland Heart owned property with 3 bedrooms or less. <b>or</b></li> <li>Customers who are moving into a Midland Heart owned property from an existing social housing tenancy and the need for that property is unlikely to change in the future. This will include sheltered and extra care accommodation</li> </ul>
Leaseholder	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Customers who own a share in their property</li> <li>Customers who own their home and Midland Heart owns the freehold of the land</li> </ul>
Secure Tenancy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Existing Midland Heart Secure Tenants who transfer to another Midland Heart owned property</li> </ul>
5 year Fixed Term Tenancy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New customers who directly before becoming a Midland Heart tenant did hold a social housing tenancy</li> <li>Customers who have successfully conducted a Fixed Term Starter Tenancy</li> <li>Customers who have successfully conducted a Fixed Term Tenancy and Midland Heart is happy to grant a further Fixed Term Tenancy</li> <li>Any existing tenant choosing to transfer to a property with 3 bedrooms or more and their tenancy status is not protected in law</li> </ul>

Source – Midland Heart Tenancy Policy v2

The policy clearly sets out that in all instances unless there is a significant change in circumstances that the Fixed Term Tenancy will be renewed and where this is not the case a clear procedure is laid down for advice and assistance and how this will be offered to the tenant.

### **Midland Heart**

You can find a copy of the policy here

<https://www.midlandheart.org.uk/displayfile.asp?id=57336>

### **6.4.2 Waterloo Housing Group**

Waterloo's Tenancy Policy sets out their approach to the types of tenancies members of the Group will grant and where tenancies are granted for a fixed term and the length of the term.

Table 5 – Tenancies to be offered by Waterloo

<b><i>The types of tenancies granted</i></b>	
4.1	<p>The types of tenancies granted by members of the Group for general needs tenants are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Periodic assured or secure lifetime tenancies as appropriate</li> <li>• Fixed term tenancies for at least five years, in addition to any prior probationary period (subject to 4.2. below). Such tenancies will be set for properties let at Affordable Rents, in accordance with the agreement entered into with the Homes and Communities Agency(see <b>Waterloo Group Policy-Properties Let at Affordable Rents</b> for more information)</li> </ul>
4.2	<p>There may be exceptional circumstances where a tenancy for a period of no less than 2 years (rather than 5) may be granted, which are compatible with the purpose of the accommodation, and reflect the efficient use of this housing stock. These circumstances are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Housing provided specifically as student accommodation</li> <li>• Some supported housing that is aimed at providing support for a limited period of time (excluding CAT 1 and 2 accommodation as outlined in 4.3 below)</li> </ul> <p>Those receiving long term support that is linked to their accommodation or have properties that have received major adaptations will receive longer fixed term tenancies based on an assessment of their future needs.</p>
4.3	<p>In the circumstances specified below existing vacant social homes will normally continue to be let as periodic assured or secure tenancies as appropriate at rents set in accordance with rent influencing regime guidance contained within the regulator’s Rent Standard Guidance (“social rents”), unless regulatory approval is sought on occasions for disposal of these homes (please also see <b>Waterloo Housing Group Affordable Rent Decision Making Policy</b>):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Properties that are potentially difficult to let, including many flats (e.g. high rise blocks)</li> <li>• Properties that require substantial major work improvements</li> <li>• All properties classed as Category 1 and Category 2 accommodation will be retained as social rent. Other properties with support systems outside the CAT 1/CAT2 definition will be considered on an individual basis</li> <li>• When it is necessary to move a vulnerable tenant from a home that is currently charged a social rent (for example, due to domestic violence or on a police recommendation). The property that they transfer to will be charged at a social rent.</li> <li>• When a tenant in a property charged a social rent is being decanted (due to a redevelopment/regeneration scheme or a major works</li> </ul>

	<p>programme). Any property they transfer to will be let at a social rent.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Any other circumstance where the tenant of a property currently charged at a social rent is being asked to move by the Group. The property they move to will be charged at a social rent.</li> <li>• There may be circumstances where a particular property, or a group of properties, is excluded from conversion to Affordable Rent for a period of time. This decision may be due to the need for positively intervention to ensure social and economic sustainability in the community. Any such interventions will be agreed by the Director of Operations for the respective association.</li> </ul>
4.3	Where those who are existing social housing tenants choose to move to another social rented home members of the Group will offer a tenancy with no less security of tenure when they move. This does not apply however where an existing tenant chooses to move to accommodation let at an Affordable Rent.
4.4	Properties let at an affordable rent will (subject to 4.2 above) be let as fixed term tenancies for new tenants and will be set in accordance with regulatory requirements. They will in all cases be for a minimum of 5 years, and will be preceded in many cases by a 12 month probationary tenancy for new tenants (unless they have previously held a social tenancy with another registered provider). We will advise all new tenants who are offered an affordable tenancy of the fact that it is a fixed term tenancy and what this means for them in terms of tenancy conditions.

Source: Waterloo Group Policy – Tenancy Management

### Waterloo Housing Group

[Http://www.waterloo.org.uk/media/122766/group-lettings-policy.pdf](http://www.waterloo.org.uk/media/122766/group-lettings-policy.pdf)

#### 6.4.3 Bromford Group

Bromfords policy clearly sets out the range of tenancies to be offered and how they will be used. Any existing tenant will have their tenancy protected and fixed term tenancies will only be used for new tenants. There is also the expectation that in all instances unless there is a significant change in circumstances that the Fixed Term Tenancy will be renewed and where it is not to be reviewed that advice and assistance will be offered to the tenant

Table 6 - Tenancy types to be offered by Bromford group

Tenancy Type	Will be offered to:
<b>Secure</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Existing Bromford customers transferring who are already on a Secure Tenancy</li> </ul>
<b>Assured Protected Tenancy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Existing Bromford customers transferring who are already on an Assured Protected Tenancy</li> </ul>

<p><b>Assured Periodic Tenancy</b> (this means a non-shorthold tenancy)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Any Bromford customer who already hold an Assured non short hold Tenancy</li> <li>• Any New Customer who already holds an Assured non short hold Tenancy unless they are moving to home let at an affordable rent</li> <li>• All customers who are in receipt of a state pension</li> <li>• All customers who are living in a designated or proposed built supported housing scheme – unless the supported housing scheme is let on Assured Short hold Tenancies (see below)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Assured Shorthold Tenancy</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minors (customers under 18)</li> <li>• Customers living in a designated or purpose built supported housing scheme that fulfills the criteria in the point below;</li> <li>• Customers living in schemes where we are contractually obliged to offer assured short hold tenancy agreements</li> </ul>
<p><b>Starter Tenancy</b> (Periodic Assured Shorthold)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New Customers who do not already hold either a Fixed, Assured non short-hold or Secure tenancy with another HA or LA</li> </ul>
<p><b>Fixed Term Tenancy</b> (Assured Shorthold Fixed Term) <b>2 or 5 years</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• (2 or 5 years) Existing Customers who have satisfactorily completed their Starter Tenancy; or,</li> <li>• (5 years) New customers who already hold an Assured Non short hold Tenancy and are moving to a home let at an affordable rent</li> </ul>
<p><b>License</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Customers in shared, temporary or hostel accommodation (mainly in Supported Housing) or where we are contractually obliged to offer license agreements.</li> </ul>

Source; Bromford Group Tenancy Policy

### **Bromford Housing**

You can find Bromfords Lettings Policy here

[http://www.bromford.co.uk/media/566057/housing\\_options\\_lettings\\_policy.pdf](http://www.bromford.co.uk/media/566057/housing_options_lettings_policy.pdf)

### **6.5 Tamworth Borough Councils Allocations Policy**

In addition to changes in length of Social Housing Tenancies and the potential impact this could have on homelessness services additionally there has been provision made to allow changes to the way Local Authorities can now allocate homes. Tamworth Borough Councils new allocation policy went live on the 20<sup>th</sup> October 2014 and is available here:

[http://www.tamworth.gov.uk/sites/default/files/housing\\_docs/Allocations\\_Policy\\_June\\_2014.pdf](http://www.tamworth.gov.uk/sites/default/files/housing_docs/Allocations_Policy_June_2014.pdf)

This policy is currently under review and the amended policy is due for publication during 2016.

## **6.6 Nominations agreements**

Legislation provides the framework for co-operation between Local Authorities and Registered Providers and nomination agreements set out the way in which this happens. The nomination agreement sets out what is expected of each of the partners. Tamworth Borough Councils nominations agreement states that the Council will get 100% nomination rights on all new build sites and 50% on other homes that come up for rent via Registered Providers.

*“Tamworth Borough Council will be offered 100% of new build schemes for first lets where the development is on subsidised land or land acquired via S106 planning gain and 50% of remaining property lettings that fall within the definition of property/lettings outlined in Paragraph 2 above, as a minimum.”*

- *Property type – At least 50% of each type of property – Bedsits, flats, maisonettes, bungalows and houses and 100% of new build schemes – will be made available to nominees of the Tamworth Borough Council.*
- *Property size – At least 50% of each size of property – 1 bed, 2 bed, 3 bed 4 bed +and 100% of new build schemes - will be made available to nominees of the Tamworth Borough Council.*

*On occasion, Partner registered providers and Tamworth Borough Council may wish to increase and/or decrease nomination percentages on individual schemes to reflect changing patterns of housing need, specific requirements of the scheme, local lettings plans and the Council's strategic priorities as identified by the Housing and Health Strategy.*

*Registered providers may wish to advertise all of their voids within the Tamworth Borough Council area via the Finding a Home website if this is consistent with the business objectives of the organisation. In this situation no charge will be incurred by the RP for advertising more than the required 50% minimum”*

Quarterly monitoring information is collated from Registered Providers to ensure that the nominations agreement is being met.

Table 7 – Registered Providers Nominations 2014-15

Registered Provider	Percentage of properties allocated to Tamworth Borough Council
Waterloo	70%
Derwent	100%
Affinity Sutton	28%
Hanover	0%
Bromford	92%
Orbit	No return received
Midland Heart	70%
Metropolitan	100%

Source: Quarterly Monitoring Returns to Tamworth Borough Council

From the chart it is evident that most registered providers are meeting their partnership obligations by nominating at least 50% of their properties. Hanover who currently has 0% have a very small number of properties available in Tamworth and have not had any properties available. Tamworth Borough Council tries to engage with all providers and most respond, however not all do. Both Waterloo and Bromford have had a number of new developments which Tamworth Borough Council has had 100% nominations on.

## 6.7 Tamworth's Local Plan

Tamworth Borough Council as a planning authority must have in place a Local Plan which sets out the Council's policies which are essential when making planning application decisions. Independent inspectors review and examine these plans before they are formally adopted and put into place.

### 6.7.1 The new Local Plan

The new Local Plan has now been adopted following the withdrawal of the Local Plan 2006 – 2028. It outlines what type of development is required, including housing, to meet our local community and business needs, scale and location, as well as policies to ensure sustainable development. There is a robust evidence base supporting the plan and it will also include policies to promote infrastructure delivery and to protect and enhance the areas built and natural environment. The local plan went through examination in June 2015.



## **6.8 Health Context**

Linked to Tamworth Borough Councils Healthier Housing Strategy there is an ambition by the Council to work more closely with Health partners to deliver housing activity which has an impact on health outcomes. It is widely known that homelessness, especially rough sleeping, has significant and often negative consequences for an individual's health, and studies have evidenced the correlation between homelessness and increased severity of health conditions and life expectancy. Helping someone who is homeless is not just about the shelter, it is about their wider health and wellbeing also.

Both No Second Night Out and Making Every Contact Count recognise this and the need for improving the health outcomes of homeless people. Due to the often complicated nature of their needs combined with the difficulties of living in insecure accommodation or on the streets, those who are homeless often struggle to access the health care they need and rely on acute hospital services such as Accident and Emergency Departments, they spend more time in hospital and make disproportionate use of substance misuse services, all of which cost the National Health Service (NHS) more money.

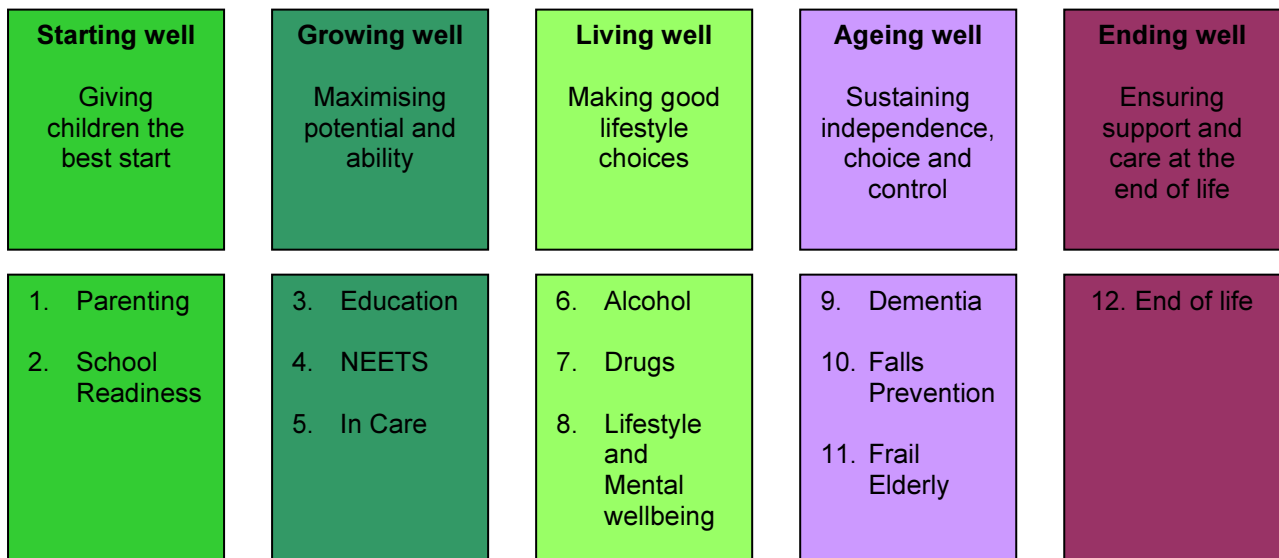
With the changes to the health service in 2013, Clinical Commissioning Groups have a duty to reduce inequalities in access to, and outcomes from healthcare. Local Authorities now have public health budgets with a "health premium" to promote action to reduce health inequalities and Directors of Public Health are the strategic leads for public health in local communities with Health and Wellbeing Boards playing a key role in bringing together the National Health Service (NHS), Public Health and Social Care Services within a local authority and developing a Health and Wellbeing Strategy based on the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA)

Additionally the Public Health Outcomes Framework, which sets out the desired outcomes for Public Health and how these will be measured, contains two indicators on homelessness as well as a number of others which will encourage a focus on the health of the homeless population. There is a specific indicator related to "people with mental illness and disability in settled accommodation" and this makes the link between housing and Mental Health explicit for the first time. The Mental Health Strategy "No Health without Mental Health" recognises that secure and stable housing is essential for good mental health and that homeless people often

experience a range of mental health problems, often linked to substance and alcohol misuse.

Staffordshire’s Health and Wellbeing Strategy identifies twelve key priority areas of action. These are shown in figure 1.

Figure 1 The twelve areas for action



Source: Living Well in Staffordshire – Our Five Year Plan 2013 – 2018 – Staffordshire Health and Wellbeing Board

More information on the Health and Wellbeing Strategy can be found here:

<http://www.staffordshirepartnership.org.uk/Health-and-Wellbeing-Board/Health-and-Wellbeing-Strategy-for-Staffordshire.pdf>

### 6.9 Tamworth’s Community and Voluntary Sector

Whilst Tamworth Borough Council has a statutory function to provide homelessness advice and services it is important to recognise that other sectors can also contribute both directly and indirectly to the prevention of homelessness.

Within Tamworth there is a strong Community and Voluntary Sector (CVS) who deliver a wide range of advice, housing services and support to vulnerable people.

Whilst there are some examples of best practice of Tamworth Borough Council working closely with the CVS in Tamworth around the prevention of Homelessness,

for example the partnership with the Citizens Advice Bureau who deliver a Money Advice Service on behalf of Tamworth Borough Council with the aim of preventing homelessness, there is still much room for improvement and in the context of cuts to Local Authority funding there is likely to be more reliance on the CVS to 'fill the gap' between local authority service provision and service-users' needs. The current climate is an opportunity for Tamworth Borough Council to engage with the CVS more effectively and efficiently to assist the Council in meeting local needs and preventing homelessness.

## **7. Equality and Diversity**

Tamworth Borough Council serves a diverse borough and we ensure that we do not discriminate in a way that is unfair, illegal or unjustified.

To help us achieve this within all services, Equality Impact Assessments (EIA) are undertaken on all Strategies and this Homelessness Strategy is no exception and an EIA for the Homelessness Strategy is available.

## **8. Approach to the review and Strategy Development**

The Tamworth Borough Council last Homelessness Strategy identified the following as priorities:

- Improve and Enhance Homelessness Prevention Activities
- Reduce the use of and time spent in Temporary Accommodation
- Improve joint working to ensure effective partnerships are in place
- Increase the supply of affordable housing and provide more settled homes
- Improve access to accommodation and services, particularly for vulnerable young people and those at risk of becoming homeless

To begin the review process an initial gap analysis of the existing Action Plan from the previous Homelessness Strategy was undertaken. This is included in this document as Appendix 2. This identified via a red, amber green system, what the service had achieved to date, work that was ongoing and actions that had not been delivered against.

This review was then undertaken to look at all the available evidence and provide a robust and meaningful evidence base. This document considers trends and looks to

predict emerging pressures. The evidence was gathered to determine if these priorities were still current, if they required revising or removing and if new priorities became apparent from the evidence.

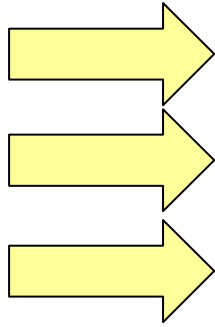
All of this evidence and information relating to the review of the previous Homelessness Strategy was then taken, and put into the context of national changes in policy and approaches and the priorities revisited and revised and the new Homelessness Strategy was produced. As a result of all of this work the priorities have remained generally similar but have been slightly revised in the changing context of the previous Coalition Governments national changes, the success of work already undertaken and Tamworth Borough Councils approach to Housing and Health and the new priorities have been identified as:

- Improving and Enhancing Homelessness Prevention Activities
- Improving joint working to ensure effective partnerships are in place
- Increasing the supply of affordable housing and provide more settled homes
- Improving access to accommodation and services, particularly for vulnerable people and those at risk of becoming homeless
- Improved Health Outcomes and reduced health inequalities for those at risk of homelessness or homeless people

This review also considers how local services could be adapted or reconfigured to meet the “10 Local Authority Challenges” set by Government in Making Every Contact Count. Additionally in line with this the Strategy and Action Plan will be reviewed and updated annually to ensure it is still meeting the priorities contained within the Healthier Housing Strategy and that it addresses the requirements of the Housing Annual Business Plan.

*Figure 2 – How the homelessness strategy was developed*

**Review of the  
2009 – 2012  
Strategy**

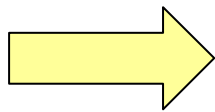


**Identifying key achievements and success factors**

**Assessing outstanding priorities, actions and emerging challenges**

**Ongoing consultation and engagement with key partners and members**

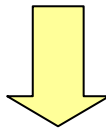
**Analysis of data and evidence**



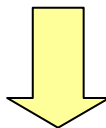
**Policy context and Statutory Requirements**

**Data gathering and collation**

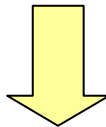
**Customer Feedback**



**Evidence base and Draft Strategy**



**Consultation**



**Final Strategy and Action Plan Published**

**9. Consulting on the new Homelessness Strategy**

Section 3(8) of the Homelessness Act 2002 states that before adopting or modifying a homelessness strategy local authorities shall consult with public or local authorities, voluntary organisations and other people considered appropriate, but within these parameters the Council are able to determine who they will consult with.

In addition to these groups identified consultation should also be undertaken with:

- Local strategic groups including the Health and Wellbeing Board, so that the Strategy integrates local service delivery across a range of partnership activity
- Department for Works and Pensions (DWP) in light of the welfare reforms.
- Those who access the service
- Private Sector Landlords given that Homelessness Duty can be discharged into the Private Rented Sector.
- Operational staff that will already be aware of where there may be gaps in service and may have some ideas around how the service could be improved to become more responsive to customer need.

Ensuring effective and wide consultation is undertaken with Stakeholders will support Tamworth Borough Council to satisfy the Strategic Element of the Gold Standard.

### **9.1 Planning the Consultation**

In July 2012 the Government published new guidance on consultation principles. Whilst these are not legal or statutory they do provide useful guidance for Councils. The new guidance says

*“Timeframes for consultation should be proportionate and realistic to allow stakeholders sufficient time to provide a considered response. The amount of time required will depend on the nature and impact of the proposal (for example the diversity of the interested parties or the complexity of the issue, or even external events) and might vary typically between two and 12 weeks”*

Tamworth Borough Council is currently developing a corporate consultation strategy. Consultation of this strategy will be conducted using the principles outlined by government and those in the corporate consultation strategy.

## **10. Evidence**

This section sets out the evidence base that was drawn upon when determining if the current priorities remained relevant or needed revision or amending when drafting the new Homelessness Strategy and informs the basis of the Action Plan and where resources are aimed to prevent Homelessness.

### 10.1 Progress since the last Homelessness Strategy

Since the last Homelessness Strategy was approved, the Council and its partners have made much progress to improve services and prevent homelessness in Tamworth.

Some of the key successes include: (For a full breakdown of what was achieved from the previous Homelessness Strategy Action Plan – see Appendix xx)

*Table 8 – Celebrating success*

What we said we would do	What we did
Launch the CAB money advice service	The service was tendered for in 2011 and was successfully delivered. The contract for the service was extended for a further 6 months from October 2013 – March 2014 and following a successful Tender this service has been reviewed, remodelled and will be delivering from April 2014 for a period of 1 year initially. The service offers a Court Desk and Money Advice Service linked directly to the prevention of homelessness and additionally the new contract offers a Tenancy Sustainment Service for Tenants of Tamworth Borough Council, tendered for in the same document and provided by the same provider, ensuring Value for Money for the Council. This contract commissioning was undertaken in partnership with Communities, Planning and Partnerships as the contract was tendered through the Commissioning Framework and teams have worked together to ensure that the Generalist Advice Service and the Money Advice Service complement each other and services are not duplicated
Review and amend the education programme with a particular focus on its partnership approach	A full and comprehensive review of the Tamworth Homelessness Education Program was undertaken in January 2012 and this resulted in the resources being redesigned and accredited for use

	<p>to deliver against the PSHE curriculum in schools. The service has also been commissioned to undertake a pilot project in prisons delivering a pre tenancy training package to prisoners to be released No Fixed Abode across the West Midlands in partnership with Nacro and NOMS (National Offender Management Service.)</p> <p>In addition to this funding was awarded from the Staffordshire and Shropshire Homelessness Prevention Partnership to develop a series of films around homelessness which led to THEP being nationally recognised by Shelter. The prison project has also been referenced in a Shelter report about homelessness and offenders.</p>
Empty Homes Scheme	<p>Tamworth Borough Council working in partnership with Waterloo housing were successful in securing a share of £100m from the HCA to bring Empty Homes back in to use over a 3 year period from 2012 to 2015. As a result of this a number of homes were bought back in to use as affordable housing, and the council have 100% nomination rights on these.</p>

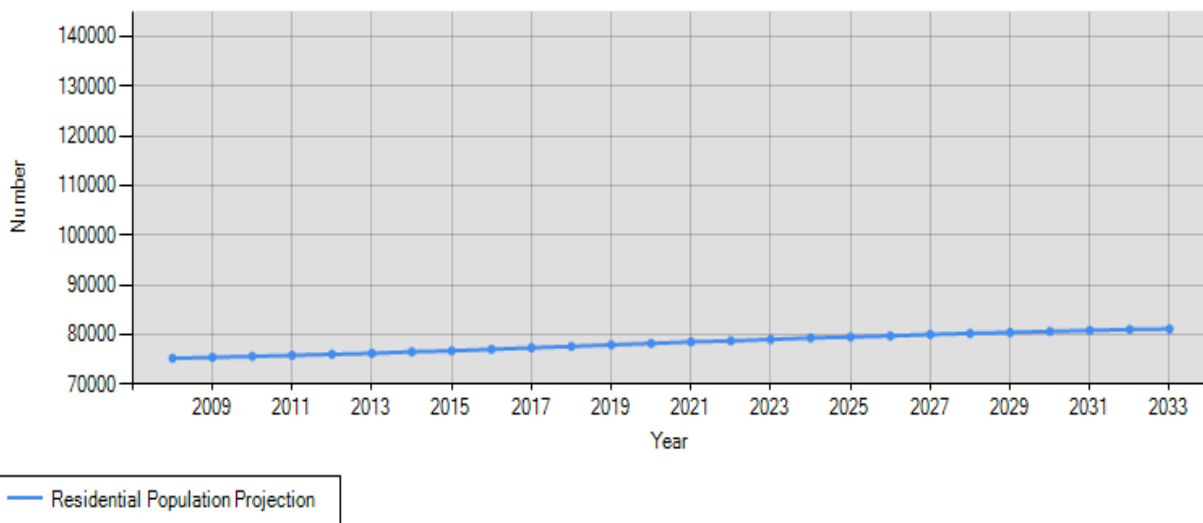


## 10.2 Demographics

### 10.2.1 Population

The 2011 Census puts the total population of Tamworth at 76,813 compared to 74,531 at the 2001 census, equating to a 3% increase in the population of the town. In terms of population Tamworth is the smallest borough in Staffordshire. Population projections suggest that the population could increase by 14% by 2035. Figure 1 shows the population projections for Tamworth until 2033 showing a steady increase.

Fig 3 – Population Projections for Tamworth to 2033



Source – Staffordshire Observatory

Tamworth still has a relatively young population but numbers have decreased since the 2001 Census which put 64% of the population below the age of 45. The 2011 Census puts this figure at 58.8%. The largest single age group in the 2001 Census was the 30 – 44 age groups at 17,449. This is still the largest group in the 2011 Census but again the numbers have declined to 16,164. What is interesting to note is the increase in numbers of residents in Tamworth over the age of 60. This is illustrated in Table 9 overleaf, which demonstrates the population by age compared across the 2001 and 2011 Census

Table 9 - Population of Tamworth by age

Age	2001 Census		2011 Census		Change %
	Number	%	Number	%	
0-4	5,007	6.7	5,061	6.6	-0.1
5-14	10,703	14.4	9,331	12.1	-2.3
15-29	14,556	19.5	14,717	19.1	-0.4
30-44	17,449	23.4	16,164	21	-2.4
45-59	15,229	20.4	15,409	20.1	-0.3
60-74	7,966	10.7	11,497	15	+ 4.3
75-84	2821	3.9	3460	4.5	+0.6
85+	800	1.0	1174	1.6	+0.6
All ages	74,531	100	76,813	100	

Source – Office of National Statistics

### 10.2.3 Gender

2010 mid year estimates put the female population of Tamworth at 50.8%, remaining the same since 2001 census and similar to the West Midlands and National figures. Table 10 and Fig 4 shows the breakdown of Gender for Tamworth compared to the West Midlands and National figures at the 2001 and 2011 Census and shows that Tamworth is broadly the same as these.

Table 10 – Gender by area

#### 2001 Census

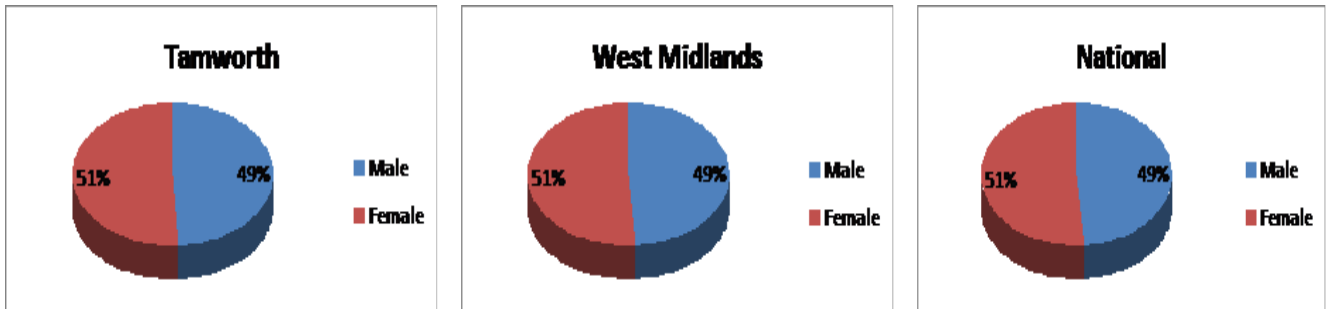
	Tamworth	% of total	% of region	West Midlands	% of total	National	% of total
Total Population	74,531	100.0%	1.4%	5,267,308	100.0%	49,138,831	100.0%
Male	36,699	49.2%	1.4%	2,575,111	48.9%	23,922,144	48.7%
Female	37,832	50.8%	1.4%	2,692,197	51.1%	25,216,687	51.3%

#### 2011 Census

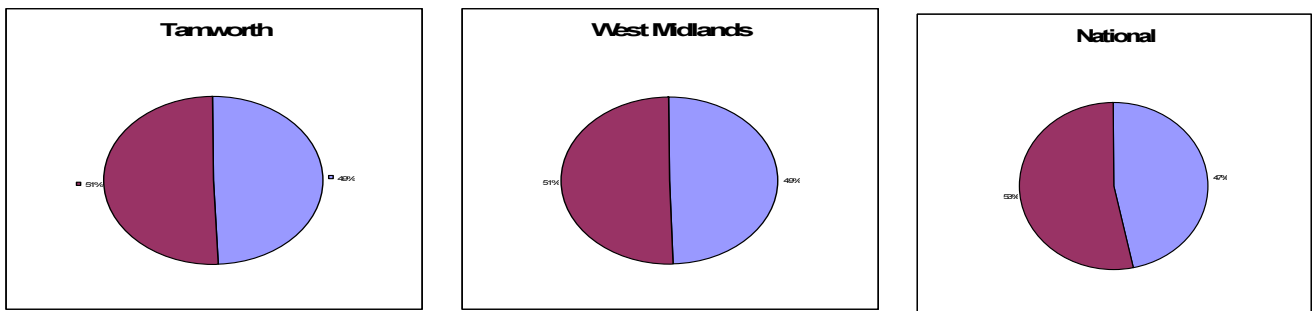
	Tamworth	% of total	% of region	West Midlands	% of total	National	% of total
Total Population	76,813	100.0%	1.4%	5,601,847	100.0%	56,012,456	100.0%
Male	37,694	49%	1.4%	2,763,187	49.4%	26,069,148	46.5%
Female	39,119	51%	1.4%	2,838,660	50.6%	29,943,308	53..5%

Source – Office for National Statistics

Fig 4 – Gender by area  
2001 Census



Source –CLG Specialist Advisor Toolkit  
2011 Census



Source – Office for National Statistics

#### 10.2.4 Life Expectancy

Average life expectancy in the UK is 80.75 years. When looked at by Gender women's life expectancy is greater than men's, with the average life expectancy for men being 78.6 and for women 82.6 years.

For men in the West Midlands this figure is 77.9 and for women it is 82.2 years.

In Staffordshire life expectancy for men is 78.4 and for women 82.5 years and in Tamworth the life expectancy for men is 78.7 and women 82.6 years.

However there are significant differences within life expectancy dependent on where the person resides in Tamworth with the gap between the ward with the lowest life expectancy and the ward with the highest life expectancy being six years. (Source: Tamworth Extended Joint Strategic Needs Assessment 2012)

The link for the eJSNA can be found here:

<http://www.staffordshirepartnership.org.uk/Health-and-Wellbeing-Board/media/TamworthBoroughJSNA.pdf>

The eJSNA is currently under review and a new one will be published in 2016

However a 2011 report compiled by Crisis entitled Homelessness: A Silent Killer highlighted the following:

*“The average age of death of a homeless person is 47 years old and even lower for homeless women at just 43 ...”*

Therefore the life expectancy of a homeless person, is significantly lower than the national, regional and local averages.

#### **10.2.5 Ethnic breakdown**

The proportion of people from minority ethnic groups within Tamworth is lower than the national average (5% compared with 13%) and the same as Staffordshire (also 5%). Table 11 shows the Ethnic breakdown of Tamworth at the 2001 Census and the comparison to the 2011 Census. This illustrates that all ethnic groups have increased in Tamworth in terms of numbers with the exception of those from a Black or Black British Caribbean and white Irish ethnic origin, the only group that has decreased in numbers.

Table 11 – Ethnicity of Tamworth

Ethnicity	2001 Census		2011 Census	
	Tamworth	% of LA	Tamworth	% of LA
White: British	71,952	96.5%	72,984 ↑	95
White: Irish	668	< 1%	504 ↓	<1%
White: Gypsy or Traveller			9	0
White: Other White	486	< 1%	1264 ↑	1.6%
Mixed: White and Black Caribbean	264	< 1%	414 ↑	<1%
Mixed: White and Black African	29	< 1%	59 ↑	<1%
Mixed: White and Asian	125	< 1%	197 ↑	<1%
Mixed: Other Mixed	70	< 1%	133 ↑	<1%
Asian or Asian British: Indian	329	< 1%	386 ↑	<1%
Asian or Asian British: Pakistani	31	< 1%	47 ↑	<1%
Asian or Asian British: Bangladeshi	7	< 1%	38 ↑	0
Asian or Asian British: Other Asian	31	< 1%	142 ↑	<1%
Black or Black British: Caribbean	326	< 1%	252 ↓	<1%

Black or Black British: African	30	< 1%	91 ↑	<1%
Black or Black British: Other Black	17	< 1%	50 ↑	<1%
Chinese or other ethnic group: Chinese	106	< 1%	150 ↑	<1%
Chinese or other ethnic group: Other ethnic group	60	< 1%		
Other Ethnic Group; Arab			30	0
Other Ethnic Group			63	<1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>74,531</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>76,813</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source – Office for National Statistics

### 10.3 Deprivation

The Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IoMD) are indicators that measure deprivation in an area by including 38 indicators which assess deprivation by combining 7 domains which are

- Income
- Employment
- Health and Disability
- Education, Skills and Training
- Barriers to Housing and Services
- Crime and Disorder
- Living Environment

These domains are all weighted and Tamworth has an overall average weighted deprivation score of 19.7 and is ranked 140<sup>th</sup> most deprived district of 326 Local Authorities and is the second most deprived district in Staffordshire. Table 12 and

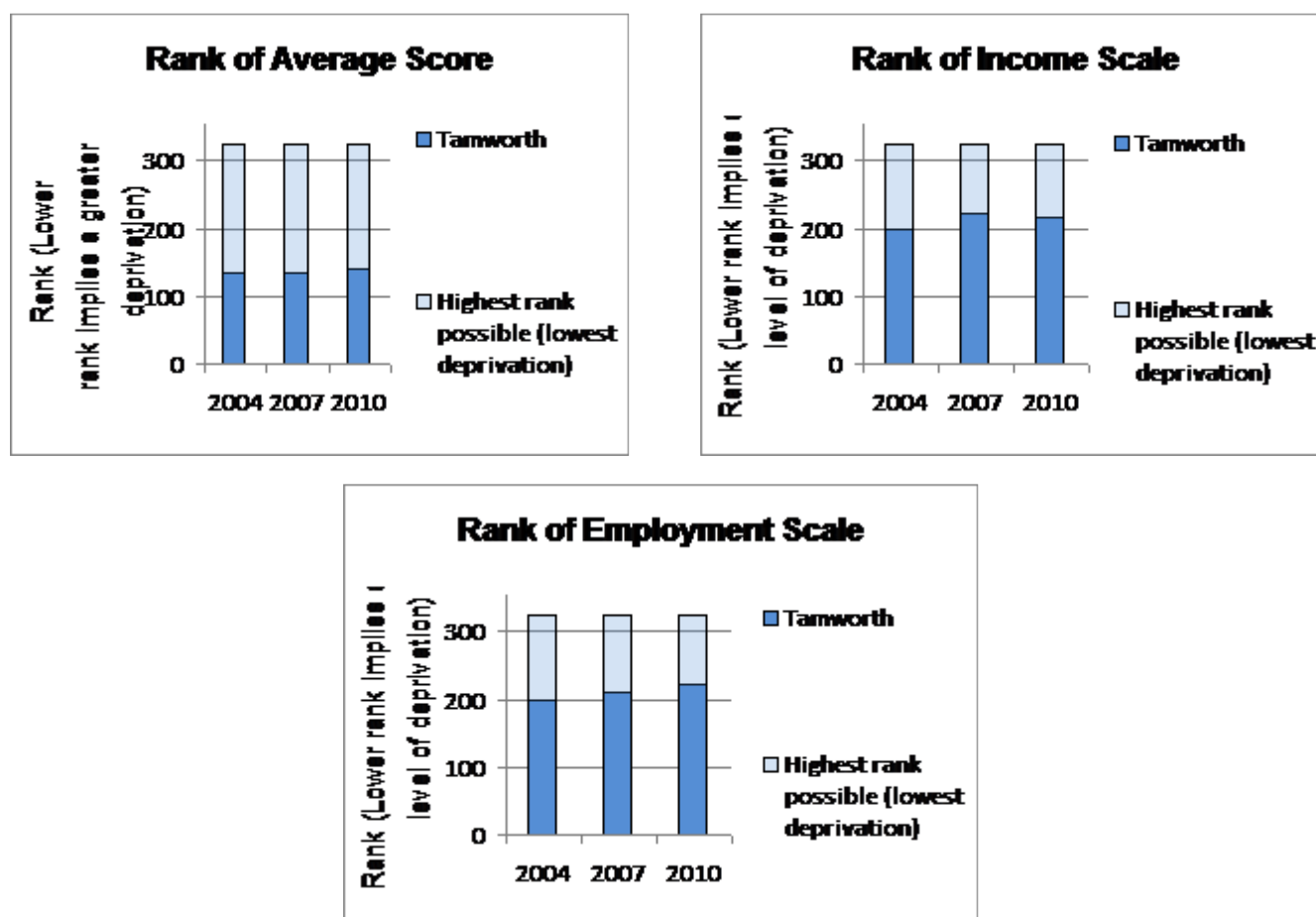
Fig 5 shows Tamworth overall and how this has changed between 2004, 2007 and 2010 showing deprivation worsened between 2004 and 2007 but remained the same between 2007 and 2010. New IoMD data is due to be released September 2015.

Table 12 - Index of Multiple Deprivation

Tamworth	2004	2007	% Change	2010	% Change
Weighted Average Score	19.65	19.76	1%	19.66	0%
Rank of Average Score	134.00	136.00	1%	140.00	3%
Extent	0.13	0.11	-2%	0.14	2%
Rank of Extent	125.00	139.00	11%	130.00	-6%
Income Scale	9,667.00	10,229.00	6%	10,189.00	0%
Rank of Income Scale	200.00	222.00	11%	216.00	-3%
Employment Scale	4,280.00	4,202.75	-2%	4,155.00	-1%
Rank of Employment Scale	200.00	212.00	6%	221.00	4%

Source –CLG Specialist Advisor Toolkit – 2012

Figure 5– Changes in the Index of Multiple Deprivation



Source – Specialist Advisor Toolkit – 2012

There are 7 Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) in Tamworth that fall within the most deprived fifth of areas in England making up 13% of the towns total population living in these areas. Table 13 shows how deprivation has altered within these 7 LSOAs between 2007 and 2010

*Table 13 – How deprivation has increased*

LSOA	Ward Name	IMD 2007 Score	National Rank (1 = most deprived)	IMD 2010 Score	National Rank	2010 population estimate
E01029845	Glascote	54.8	1502	56.4	1219	1100
E01029840	Glascote	39.7	4930	44.9	3251	1300
E01029828	Belgrave	39.0	4947	43.7	3526	1300
E01029824	Amington	37.5	5383	41.6	4091	1600
E01029835	Castle	40.1	4619	40.5	4419	1700
E01029842	Glascote	36.3	5802	38.3	5094	1400
E01029859	Stonydelph	35.1	6231	36.5	5681	1800

Source – Indices of Deprivation 2010 – Department for Communities and Local Government and 2010 mid year population estimates for LSOA, Office for National Statistics

Table 13 shows that in all LSOAs deprivation has increased since 2007.

Income deprivation in relation to children has generally increased, and older people has decreased, however Belgrave was the Ward that saw an increase in deprivation for both groups between 2007 and 2010. Therefore deprivation in some areas of Tamworth is increasing and ties in with decreasing life expectancy.

Additionally the 2011 Census identified household dimensions of deprivation, which are indicators based on four selected household characteristics. A household is deprived in a dimension if they meet one or more of the following conditions:

- Employment: any member of a household not a full-time student is either unemployed or long-term sick,



- Education: no person in the household has at least level 2 education and no person aged 16-18 is a fulltime student,
- Health and disability: any person in the household has general health 'bad or very bad' or has a long term health problem, and
- Housing: Household's accommodation is ether overcrowded, with an occupancy rating -1 or less, or is in a shared dwelling, or has no central heating.

A household is classified as being deprived in none, or one to four of these dimensions in any combination. Table 14 shows the numbers of households classified as in deprivation.

*Table 14 – Households dimensions of deprivation*

Area	Household is not deprived in any dimension	Household is deprived in 1 dimension	Household is deprived in 2 dimensions	Household is deprived in 3 dimensions	Household is deprived in 4 dimensions
Tamworth	13,182	10,181	6,539	1,580	135

Source – 2011 Census

What this shows is that 18,435 households in Tamworth consider themselves to be deprived in one or more dimensions (significantly more than those who do not)

## Food Banks

Since the Tamworth Foodbank opened its doors in the Manna House Centre on Glascoate Road in October 2011, it has provided over 1200 days of food, which equates to 400 individuals and families from Tamworth in financial crisis having received help.

Over 40 local agencies - charities, churches, schools and statutory bodies - have joined forces with Foodbank and are recognised as official Referral Partners of the project. This means that should any of these front-line professional care agencies encounter people in crisis, they can write out a food vouchers for three days' of emergency food cover, which is then collected from the Centre.

This is in line with National trends that show foodbank usage is on the increase nationally, with usage tripling in the last 12 months. Trussell Trust foodbanks (who are responsible for the Tamworth foodbank) have seen the biggest rise in numbers of people being given emergency food since the charity began in 2000. Almost 350,000 people have received at least three days emergency food from Trussell Trust foodbanks during the last 12 months, nearly 100,000 more than anticipated and close to triple the number helped in 2011-12. Rising cost of living, static incomes, changes to benefits, underemployment and unemployment have meant increasing numbers of people in the UK have hit a crisis that forces them to go hungry. These statistics predate the Welfare Reforms that were introduced in April 2013.

<http://tamworth.foodbank.org.uk/>

### 10.4 Rate of new household formation

The government projects what demand for housing may be in the future, and what the requirements of the population will be in terms of housing. Current national projections suggest that:

- The number of households in England is projected to grow to 24.3 million in 2021, an increase of 2.2 million (10 per cent) over 2011, or 221,000 households per year.
- The projections represent a decrease in average household size from 2.36 to 2.33 in ten years.
- Collectively, couple households (with or without other adults) are projected to grow by around 87,000 per year on average, equating to forty percent of the total increase in households between 2011 and 2021.
- Two thirds (67 per cent) of the increase in households between 2011 and 2021 is projected for households without any dependent children.

- The increase in the number of households headed by the younger age groups is projected to be relatively lower than the increase in households headed by older people.

(source:[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/190229/Stats\\_Release\\_2011FINALDRAFTv3.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/190229/Stats_Release_2011FINALDRAFTv3.pdf))

#### **10.4.1 Migration into and from the Borough**

Tamworth has seen consistently high levels of net outward migration since 1998/99, peaking in 2003/04 when 3,300 residents moved out of the Borough with only 2,700 moving in. (Source: Tamworth Borough Councils Southern Staffordshire Districts Housing Needs Study and SHMA update 2012)

Generally therefore population growth since 1999 in Tamworth has therefore been driven in Tamworth by natural change (the balance between births and deaths)

#### **10.5 Supply of Housing and Affordability**

##### **10.5.1 Housing supply**

According to the 2011 census there are 31,617 households in Tamworth. These are made up of a mix of tenures, Tamworth Borough Council owned stock; housing owned by Registered Providers, private rented properties and owner occupied homes.

##### **10.5.2 Social Housing**

Tamworth Borough Council is a stock retaining authority and has responsibility for 4,482 (this number is from the 2011 Census and is slightly different to the figure in table below which is taken from an analysis of Tamworth Borough Councils Orchard Housing System) properties in the Borough or 14.2% of the total housing stock.

As of October 2015 there were 1674 households on the waiting list for housing. Table 15 shows the total number of Council Stock broken down by property type and how many of each property type have come up for let each year since 2010.

Table 15 – Current housing stock totals and numbers for rent each year

Property Type	Current Housing Stock 18/5/15 Total 4400	Empty Properties 2011/12	Empty Properties 2012/13	Empty Properties 2013/14	Empty Properties 2014/15
House (2 bed)	480	26	14	27	22
House (3 bed)	1832	55	43	60	59
House (4 bed)	141	4	6	6	7
House (5+ beds)	9				0
Bungalow (1 bed)	203	16	14	10	11
Bungalow (2 bed)	27	3	2	2	3
Flat (1 bed)	529	75	54	52	49
Flat (2 bed)	304	28	26	19	29
Flat (3 bed)	16	2	2	4	6
Flat high rise 1 bed	138	7	10	11	12
Flat high rise 2 bed	166	7	10	7	9
Maisonette 2 bed	105	18	7	12	12
Maisonette 3 bed	85*	9	8	38	29
Sheltered (includes extra care)	365	26	25	52	56
<b>Total</b>	<b>4400</b>	<b>276</b>	<b>221</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>314</b>

\*number increased as 1 property brought back into stock.

Source: Orchard Housing System

It can be seen that from April 2011 the number of properties being made available to rent in a one year period has never exceeded 300. A total of 797 properties were available to rent between April 2011 and April 2014. The chart also shows there is a shortage of 1 bedroom properties with only 52 available across the borough, meaning the chances of being allocated a 1 bedroom property is low for those on the waiting list.

Table 16 – Numbers on waiting list by property type as of December 2012, August 2013 and January 2015

Bedrooms	December 2012	August 2013	Changes in demand	January 2015	Changes in demand
1 Bed	873 (50% of list)	1,122 (59% of list)	+249 (22%)	1052 (60% of list)	-70 (6%)
2 Bed	694	635	+59 (10%)	520	-115 (22%)
3 Bed	150	105	-45 (43%)	119	+14 (12%)
4 Bed	32	32	0	43	+9 (21%)
5 Bed	5	4	-1 (80%)	4	0
Total	1754	1898		1738	

Source: Orchard Housing System

Numbers on the waiting list have risen and fallen over the 3 year period. Demand for 1 bedroom properties is the highest, currently with 60% on the list requiring a one bedroom property. This could be linked to the welfare reform under occupancy charge. Larger properties are consistently the least in demand.

Numbers on the waiting list have fallen since 2013. This could be due to a number of reasons including the new allocations policy and the introduction of the under occupancy charge where if a tenant is under occupying their property by one bedroom they will lose 14% in their housing benefit payment and 25% if they are under occupying a two bedrooms. Demand for smaller properties has increased as tenants attempt to move in to properties that are more suitable.

Table 17 – numbers on waiting list by month in 2013 and 2014.

Month	2013	2014	Percentage difference between years
January	2112	1936	8.3% ↓
February	2127	1942	8.7% ↓
March	2110	1923	8.9% ↓
April	2042	1912	6.7% ↓
May	2043	1904	6.8% ↓
June	2012	1890	6.1% ↓
July	1982	1871	5.6% ↓
August	1907	1840	3.5% ↓
September	1917	1760	8.2% ↓
October	1895	1728	8.8% ↓
November	1912	1732	9.4% ↓
December	1921	1733	9.8% ↓

Source – Orchard Housing Management

Numbers on the waiting list dropped from Feb 2013 – November 2013 but have begun to increase again, however despite this rise numbers still are lower than they had been in early 2013. In December 2014 the number on the waiting list had fallen by nearly 10% from the same month in the previous year.

### 10.5.3 Registered Providers in the Borough

There are a number of Registered Providers in the Borough responsible for 5.1% (1626) properties. The main providers are:

- Waterloo Housing Group
- Midland Heart
- Bromford Housing

The Affordable Rent Model was introduced in April 2011 to Registered Providers Affordable Rents offer shorter term tenancies at a rent higher than a social rent, up to typically 80% of local market rate.

This allows Registered Providers to generate additional rental income which should contribute to the delivery of new affordable homes and was combined with a reduction in funding available for the development of new social housing from the Government.

Existing tenants of the Registered Providers are paying social rents, however where a tenant moves out of a property this can be converted to an affordable rent and all new developments will attract an affordable rent.

Tamworth Borough Councils Tenancy Strategy sets out that they would like to engage in meaningful dialogue with Registered Providers about conversions. During quarters 1 and 2 of 2013/14 Bromford housing have converted 3 existing social rent properties to affordable rents and Midland Heart 5 properties. However given that these are tied to fixed term tenancies this has implications for the potential for homelessness at the end of the five year period they are issued for if the tenant's circumstances change.

#### **10.5.4 Affordability of Social Housing**

In relation to the affordability of Social Housing 14% of people in the Borough are unable to afford existing social rents. However with the introduction of affordable rents 49% of people could afford social rents but not an 80% market rent. 63% of households in need would be unable to afford 80% market rents without benefits.

(Source: Southern Staffordshire Districts Housing Needs Study and SHMA update 2012)

Table 18 shows the changes in rent levels by comparing social rents with 80% market rents in Tamworth. In all properties the affordable rent is more than the social rent but the difference is more marked for larger type properties and table 19 looks at the current Local Housing Allowance Rates for Tamworth.

Table 18 – Affordable and Social Rents comparison in Tamworth

	Social Rent	80% Rent (Affordable)	Difference
Average	£284	£420	+£136 (48%)
1 Bedroom property	£257	£316	+£59 (23%)
2 Bedroom Property	£289	£428	+£139 (48%)
3 Bedroom Property	£322	£480	+£158 (49%)

(Source Southern Staffordshire Districts Housing Needs Study and SHMA update 2012)

Table 19 – Local Housing Allowance Rates for Tamworth 2015-16

Type of accommodation	Weekly	4 Weekly	Monthly
<b>Shared accommodation rate</b>	<b>£66.70</b>	<b>£266.80</b>	<b>£289.03</b>
<b>1 bedroom rate</b>	<b>£90.90</b>	<b>£363.60</b>	<b>£393.90</b>
<b>2 bedroom rate</b>	<b>£113.92</b>	<b>£455.68</b>	<b>£493.66</b>
<b>3 bedroom rate</b>	<b>£129.47</b>	<b>£517.88</b>	<b>£561.04</b>
<b>4 bedroom rate</b>	<b>£170.67</b>	<b>£682.68</b>	<b>£739.57</b>

Source: Tamworth Borough Council website

In all instances if someone were on benefits they would not be able to afford the additional costs with affordable rent.

### 10.5.5 Private Renting

The 2011 census identified that 11% or 3476 homes in the Borough are privately rented, with 25.1% of households are living in unsuitable (non decent) private rented accommodation. This is lower than the national average of non decent properties.



Decency is accessed by a property being above the legal minimum standard of housing, be in a reasonable state of repair, have reasonable modern facilities such as kitchens and bathrooms, and provide reasonable degree of thermal comfort, i.e. effective insulation and efficient heating sources. The term non decent is not always appropriate for example a property may be classed as non decent if for example a central heating system isn't working, but structurally the property is in a reasonable state of repair and in this case can easily be brought up to a decent standard with the repair of the heating system. (Source: Tamworth Borough Councils Private Sector Stock Condition Survey).

#### **10.5.6 Affordability of Private Rented Homes**

Private rents in Tamworth range on average from £325 - £575 per month for a 1 bedroom property to £495 - £1200+ per month for a 3-bedroom+ property, with the average private rent being £645pcm. In terms of affordability, 31% of existing households are unable to afford to rent privately and 65% of newly forming households would be unable to afford to rent. (Source: Tamworth Borough Councils Southern Staffordshire Districts Housing Needs Study and SHMA update 2012) From the LHA rates table it can be seen that private rent may be unaffordable for many on benefits based on average rent, which may lead to a shortfall between in housing benefit and the rent.

1206 (as of February 2015) Private rented tenants are in receipt of housing benefit. (Source: Tamworth Borough Council Benefits)

#### **10.5.7 Owner Occupation**

68.2% (21,575) of the 31,617 households in Tamworth are owned either outright or with a mortgage according to the 2011 Census.

#### **10.5.8 Affordability of Owner Occupation in Tamworth**

In July 2015 the average property price in the UK was £195,055 in Tamworth the average asking price is £173,292. From July 2014 to 2015 1157 properties were sold.

Table 20- Changes in house prices in Tamworth.

Property Type	April 2014 (£)	April 2015 (£)	Change %
Detached	223,250	238,000	+ 7
Semi	135,000	140,000	+ 4
Terraced	129,950	125,975	- 3%
Flat	102,000	89,250	-13%

(Source:[http://www.home.co.uk/guides/house\\_prices\\_report.htm?location=tamworth&lastyear=1](http://www.home.co.uk/guides/house_prices_report.htm?location=tamworth&lastyear=1))

Tamworth Borough Councils Southern Staffordshire and Districts Housing Needs Study and SHMA update identifies that that 56.2% of working households between the ages of 20-39 years would not be able to afford to buy a home at lower quartile house prices. A two income household in Tamworth would require an annual joint household income of at least £32,241 and a £16,500 deposit to afford an entry level home.

The report details trends in housing market affordability and the challenges young working households face in buying a home at market price. The apparent gap in affordability leaves many households of all ages striving to obtain intermediate housing, which is limited due to land availability for building, and as council housing stock numbers have reduced and are likely to continue to reduce given the previous Governments revised Right to Buy Scheme. The new Conservative government are hoping to extend the Right to Buy Scheme to Housing Association properties too.

As with most Councils, Tamworth faces challenges to ensure its residents are appropriately housed. Tamworth's Council stock is reducing at a slow rate each year, and at the present time the Council is not meeting its target to complete 183 units of affordable homes per annum. There is an overall shortfall of affordable housing last year (2014) only 43 affordable units were built in Tamworth meaning only 20% of the target was accomplished.

(Source Southern Staffordshire Districts Housing Needs Study and SHMA update 2012)

Additionally in 2012 Tamworth was identified as a repossession and eviction hotspot by Shelter ranked as 116 out of 324 local authorities by rate of possession claims in

the Country. Tamworth was 12<sup>th</sup> in the West Midlands Region coming behind authorities such as Wolverhampton, Birmingham and Stoke on Trent having 245 claims for Mortgage and Landlord possession between October 2011 and September 2012.

(Source: Eviction Risk Monitor 2012. Local rates of rental and mortgage possession claims)

The latest figures from Shelter reveal Tamworth is still ranked high within the West Midlands in 9<sup>th</sup> place. There were 287 claims for mortgage and landlord possession in 2014. Nationally Tamworth ranked 93<sup>rd</sup> in England, again this is rise since the 2012 report.

(Source:

[https://england.shelter.org.uk/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0020/1031816/2014\\_Repo\\_Hotspots\\_September\\_Quarter\\_2014\\_Final.pdf](https://england.shelter.org.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0020/1031816/2014_Repo_Hotspots_September_Quarter_2014_Final.pdf))

High levels of home ownership place great pressure upon making rented accommodation more widely available and accessible to those on lower incomes.

## **10.6 Wider supply of housing**

### **10.6.1 Empty Homes**

There are 264 long term empty homes in Tamworth as of April 2015, 6 of these properties have been long term empties, (empty over 6 months). The Council offers advice and assistance to the owners of these homes to bring them back into use, and as a last resort could use enforcement.

The Council offers grants of up to £10,000 to owners to bring homes back and receives three year nomination rights in return for this. The Council has given two grants to return Empty Homes back into use.

Alternatively working with Waterloo Housing the Council secured a share of the Homes and Communities Agency £100m to bring empty homes back into use. The Council referred empty homes to the scheme and the owner signs a six year lease with Waterloo who then renovates the property and brings it back into use, managing the property with the Council getting 100% of nomination rights. Tamworth Borough Council working with Waterloo Housing brought seven properties back into use via this scheme. As the Waterloo Empty Homes Scheme has now ended the Council is reviewing its approach to Empty Homes.

### **10.6.2 Garage Sites**

In partnership with Waterloo housing Tamworth Borough Council have re-developed a number of council owned garage sites in to affordable accommodation. The garage sites are part of a redevelopment programme for under used garages and sites that historically have been hard to let and attracted anti social behaviour. Twenty-two new affordable homes - 18 for rent and 4 for shared ownership have been completed across five different locations within the borough:

- Kipling Rise
- Keats Close
- Fontenaye Road
- Shelley Road
- Masfield Drive

The developments have been funded in partnership with Waterloo Housing Group and a grant for £620,000 from the Homes and Communities Agency. A second tranche of sites are now close to completion and a third tranche is currently being considered.

### **10.6.3 Regeneration**

Tamworth Borough Council launched a £21m regeneration programme in 2012 to redevelop two areas of Tamworth, Tinkers Green and the Kerria. The areas were chosen for redevelopment due Council owned stock being hard to let as well as being outdated and no longer suitable to meet current housing need. The council has embarked on a decant process and are supporting residents in to alternative accommodation. Once properties are empty they will be completely demolished ready for new Council homes to be built. Consultation with neighbours and current tenants is on going to ensure the new properties are fit for purpose and will meet local needs.

#### **10.6.4 Shared Ownership**

Properties are available for Shared ownership within the borough. Seen as a “foot on the housing ladder” shared ownership can offer a chance to own a property but at a reduced cost.

An owner can purchase a share in a property usually between 25% and 75% for the remaining share they pay a rent to the registered provider, while paying a mortgage on the rest of the property, or they can alternatively buy their share out right if they have the means .

Owners do have the option to purchase the remaining shares in their property a piece at a time, this is known as staircasing, but are not obliged to do this.

Currently in Tamworth there are 158 shared ownership properties offered by Waterloo, Bromford and Midland Heart.

#### **10.6.5 Help to Buy Midlands**

Help to Buy Midlands is a government backed scheme which promotes affordable homeownership. There is a variety of criteria and schemes available depending on individual needs and circumstances. They also process all applications for customers interested in the equity loan scheme on behalf of the Government. Tamworth has a number of building programs across the Borough where Help to Buy is available. As social housing tenants (as well as army personnel) are a key target for Help to Buy Tamworth Borough Council have hosted number Help to Buy events in the reception area, and have promoted Help to Buy through mail outs, twitter, Facebook and through the digital media in the reception area. Further information about help to buy is on the Help to buy website

[www.helptobuymidlands.co.uk](http://www.helptobuymidlands.co.uk)

## **Help to Buy Case Study**

### **Escape from Generation Rent**

With the average age of the first time buyer now at 37 Danny Thomas (22), and office administrator Elizabeth Leedham (20), thought it would be years before they'd be getting a foot on the property ladder.

Trainee accountant Danny and Elizabeth were both living at home with their parents in Tamworth, Staffordshire, but were keen to settle down and get a place together. Danny says: "We started to look into buying, but soon discovered that we couldn't afford anything on the open market, because we didn't have the huge deposit needed. We didn't want to rent and end up being in that vicious circle of not being able to save, because we were paying a huge rent".

So the couple were delighted when they heard about the Help to Buy equity loan scheme. Keen to find out more they visited the Morris Homes development in Wilnecote.

Danny says: "The whole process was so simple; we were helped every step of the way by the developer and the independent financial advisor. They sent everything to Orbit Help to Buy Agents for us, who assessed our application. We found out within days, that the equity loan was sustainable for us - it was all stress free for us".

Within two months, the couple moved into their brand new three-bedroom home. Danny says: "The Help to Buy scheme has been brilliant for us; without it, we would have had to wait for years to get a foot on the property ladder. We had both thought that buying a home like this was way out of our reach and we feel really proud of what we've achieved at our age."

Source: [www.helptobuymidlands.co.uk](http://www.helptobuymidlands.co.uk)

## **10.7 Earnings and employment**

The average gross weekly pay in Tamworth for a full time worker is £453.70, which is lower than the West Midlands average (£480.60) and lower than the national average (£520.00). This breaks down further into average weekly gross incomes for males at £ 508.90, again lower than the West Midlands average (£518.89) and lower than the national average (£561.50). There is a sharp contrast for female workers in the Borough who earn an average weekly gross wage of £381.90 which is lower than both the West Midlands average (£421.) and the National average (£463.00).

(Source Nomis Labour Market Profile Tamworth – Earnings by residence 2014)

The average household income for Tamworth is £36,800 which is less than the Great Britain average (£40,000). Around a third of Tamworth households have an average income of under £20,000. (Source: Tamworth Health and wellbeing profile 2015)

The proportion of households within Tamworth living in the private sector with an income of less than £15,000 was 30.9% compared to 25.1% nationally (Source: Tamworth Borough Councils Private Sector Stock Condition Survey 2010)

Data from the 2013/14 annual population survey found that similar proportions of people aged 16-64 in Tamworth were in employment compared to the England average (72% for both). Unemployment in Tamworth (as at Feb 2015) was lower, at 0.7% or around 370 claimants than England (2%).

Of Tamworth's population, 69.8% of residents are of working age. (Source ONS Local labour market indicators by Unitary and Local Authority February 2015) 76.6% are economically active and only 370 people are claiming JSA or 0.7% of the population of Tamworth. (Nomis Local Population Survey cited 27/2/15) 2990 residents are claiming ESA and incapacity benefits. 69.8% of the population are in employment. 4.7% of the population are unemployed. 23.3% of the population are economically inactive.

*Table 21 – Employment Rates*

<b>Tamworth</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>Change</b>
Economic activity rate - aged 16-64	75.5%	76.7%	+1.1%
Employment rate - aged 16-64	65.9%	69.8%	+3.9%
% aged 16-64 who are employees	59.3%	57.3%	+2%
% aged 16-64 who are self employed	5.6%	12.5%	+6.9%
Unemployment rate - aged 16-64	12.6%	4.7%	-7.9%
% who are economically inactive - aged 16-64	24.5%	23.3%	1.2%
% of economically inactive who want a job	31.4%	unavailable	-10%
% of economically inactive who do not want a job	68.6%	78.3%	-9.7%
% on job seekers allowance	2.8%	0.7%	-2.1%

Source: NOMIS – Annual Population Survey

## **10.8 Managing Council Rent Arrears**

Tamworth Borough Council has a team dedicated to ensuring timely rent payments and managing rent arrears, and reducing housing debt for their current stock. The council has an obligation to support its tenants who are experiencing financial hardship or who are struggling to pay their rent. Although evictions do sometimes take place, the council has to do everything in its power to ensure that the tenant has been offered every opportunity to pay their rent and re-pay their arrears.

The Tamworth Borough Council website outlines the following steps for tenants who may have rent arrears:

**Stage 1:** Missed rent payments/paying less than you should; we will contact you. If you do not pay your arrears or they increase, we will contact you again.

**Stage 2:** If these remain unpaid, you will receive notice informing you we intend to take you to court; a Notice of Seeking Possession or a Notice to Quit.

**Stage 3:** At any time between four weeks and one year after sending a Notice Of Seeking Possession or a Notice To Quit, we can issue a court summons

**Stage 4:** Application to the courts. Usually you can stay in your home, if you pay off arrears at an appropriate rate. You will be liable for all court costs.

**Stage 5:** If you do not keep to the Court Order arrangements, we will apply for a warrant to evict you. This is a last resort  
The income team manage evictions of council tenants, the housing solutions team

**Stage 6:** The bailiffs will call to evict you. If you are evicted you are likely to be deemed 'intentionally homeless'. This means that you may not be re-housed by us and are likely to have difficulty finding somewhere else to live.

Tamworth Borough Council has evicted 22 households to date in 2014/15, this was also the total figure for 2013/14. It is anticipated the rate of evictions may increase due to the implementation of universal credit where tenants will be responsible for their rent payments rather than rent being paid directly to the council as it is currently, and due to ongoing cuts to benefits and services.



### **10.9 Analysis of impact of welfare reforms**

Unfortunately no local data is available regarding the impact of the welfare reforms, how many people have been sanctioned, and of those how many are repetitively sanctioned.

The government claim that since the Welfare reforms only 0.00057% of people have received a full 3 year sanction and that 70% of claimants who have been sanctioned go on in to employment

(source: <http://www.theguardian.com/society/2015/feb/04/benefit-sanctions-work-jobs-effective-employment-esther-mcvey>)

The government has completed an independent review of Job Seeker Allowance sanctions for claimants involved in the work programme. The review which claimed that in 2013 there were 1,015,000 referrals to decision makers for potential sanctions across the whole benefit system, of those 291,000 claimants had sanctions applied.

For those involved in the work programme information for other groups is currently unavailable, 33% of initial sanctions were reviewed and between 43 to 53% (dependent on the work programme) had sanction decisions over turned.

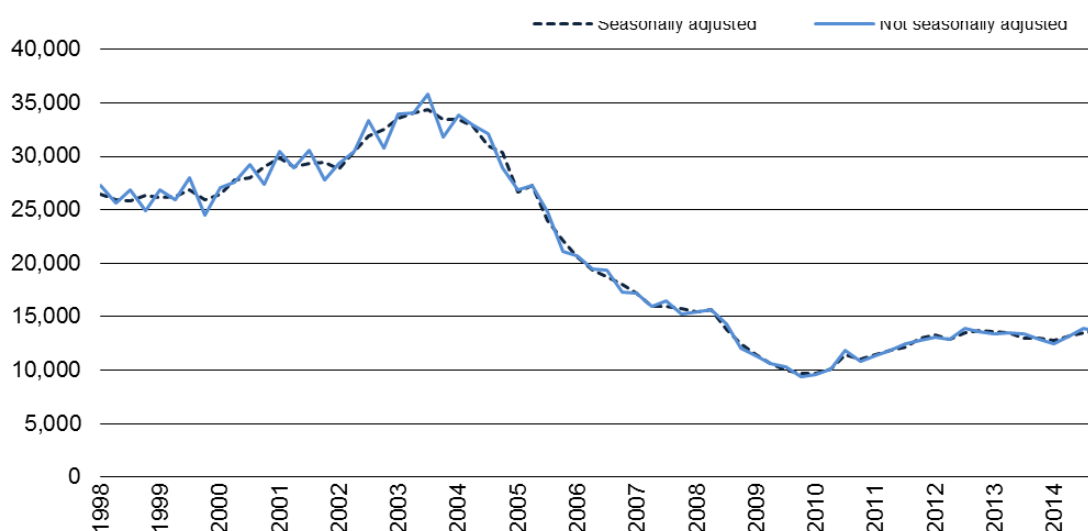
The full report is available here:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/335144/jisa-sanctions-independent-review.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/335144/jisa-sanctions-independent-review.pdf)

### **10.10 Homelessness**

In England between 1 October and 31 December 2014, local authorities accepted 13,650 households, up 6 per cent compared to the same quarter last year. The number of acceptances during the fourth quarter of 2014 was 13,690, an increase of 1 per cent from the seasonally-adjusted figure of 13,540 in the previous quarter. Figure 7 shows the number of acceptances in England since 1998. The annual number of acceptances peaked in 2003 at 135,590 before falling to a low of 41,780 in 2009. In 2014 the annual number of acceptances was 53,250, 61 per cent below the peak of 135,590 in 2003, and 27 per cent higher than the low of 41,780 five years before.

Figure 6 – National levels of homelessness



(Source CLG Statutory Homelessness October to December Housing Statistical Release)

Table 22 – Homeless Applications by year

Year	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Number of Homeless Applications Tamworth	103	137	137	129	210

(Source P1e returns DCLG)

From the chart it is clear to see that homeless applications have been on a slow increase since 2010 with a slight dip in applications in 2013, however in 2014 Tamworth saw a 61% increase in applications. This correlates with the figure of those accepted as homeless.

In 2014 83 households were accepted as homeless and in priority need.

### 10.10.1 Reasons for homelessness

A number of different personal and social factors can contribute towards people becoming homeless. These may include one or more of the following:

- **Individual factors** including drug and alcohol misuse, lack of qualifications, lack of social support, debts - especially mortgage or rent arrears which could be due to a loss of job or a reduction in hours, poor physical and mental health, relationship breakdown, and being involved in crime at an early age.

- **Family background** including family breakdown and disputes, sexual and physical abuse in childhood or adolescence, having parents with drug or alcohol problems, and previous experience of family homelessness
- **An institutional background** including having been in care, the armed forces, or in prison.
- **Structural factors** including a lack of affordable housing, housing policies, wider policy initiatives such as the welfare benefit reforms

Nationally the main reason given for the cause of homelessness loss of an Assured Shorthold Tenancy and relatives and friends no longer willing to accommodate. All reasons nationally are shown in Table 22.

*Table 23 – Households accepted by the Local Authority as being owed a main homelessness duty by reason for loss of the last settled home – National*

Reason for Homelessness	January to March 2014	April to June 2014	July to September 2014	October to December 2014
Relatives/Friends no longer willing to accommodate – Parents	1950	1930	2010	1930
Relatives/Friends no longer willing to accommodate – other	1530 Total 3480	1520 Total 3450	1680 Total 3690	1700
Relationship Breakdown with partner – Violent	1480	1640	1720	1690
Relationship Breakdown with partner – Other	660 Total 2140	620 Total 2260	740 Total 2460	630
Mortgage arrears (Repossession or other loss of home)	220	220	210	200
Rent Arrears	410	430	410	400

Ending of an Assured Shorthold Tenancy	3340	3950	4000	4060
Loss of other rented or tied housing	710	720	820	780
Other Reasons	2210	2160	2310	2270

Source CLG Quarterly P1 (E) returns – Statutory Homelessness: Households accepted by Local Authorities owed a main homelessness duty by reason of loss of last settled home

Table 23 shows the reasons for Homelessness in Tamworth and these reflect the national trends, with the main reasons given as parental eviction or other friend or relative eviction and loss of Assured Short hold Tenancies. This is closely followed by the breakdown of relationships, with many of these being the result of Domestic Abuse.

*Table 24 - Reasons for homelessness in Tamworth*

Reason	Jan – Mar 13	Apr – Jun 13	Jul – Sept 13	Oct – Dec 13	Jan – Mar 14	Apr – Jun 14	Jul – Sept 14	Oct – Dec 14
Parental eviction	2	8	6	8	7	11	11	10
Other relative friend evict	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Non Violent relationship breakdown	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	3

Violent relationship breakdown	5	3	2	0	0	5	5	6
Violence involving other non associated person	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Racially motivated violence	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other forms of violence	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Racially motivate harassment	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other forms of harassment	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mortgage arrears	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Rent arrears – Local Authority or other public sector	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Rent arrears – Registered Provider	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Rent Arrears Private Rented Sector	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Termination of Assured Short hold Tenancy	4	5	1	0	0	7	7	6
Other reasons for loss of rented or tied accommodation	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Required to leave accommodation provided by the Home Office as a form of asylum support	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Left prison/on remand	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Left hospital	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Left other institution or LA care	0	1	2	0	0	0	0	0
Left HM forces	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Other reason	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	3

Source – P1e returns to the Department for Communities and Local Government

### 10.10.2 Priority Need

Local authorities' must give housing advice to anyone who is homeless or at risk of homelessness. However there are certain households where there is a priority need for accommodation, which because of their age or background are at greater risk when homeless.

Table 25 – Priority need reasons - Nationally 2014

	Jan – Mar 14	Apr – Jun 14	Jul – Sep 14	Oct- Dec 14
Homeless emergency	80	40	50	60
Dependent children	8130	8820	9350	9350
Pregnant no other dependent child	960	1000	950	950
16/17 year olds and formally in care and aged between 18-20	350	320	340	340

Old age	220	240	220	220
Physical disability	920	860	960	960
Mental ill health	1050	1020	1150	1150
Fled home because of violence or threat of violence	350	390	390	390
Other (includes those released from custody, HM Forces, and fleeing home due to violence other than Domestic Abuse)	470	510	500	500

Source CLG Quarterly P1 (E) returns – Statutory Homelessness: Households accepted by Local Authorities owed a main homelessness duty by Priority Need category

Tamworth follows the National trend for priority need with those with dependent children being the main reason and pregnant with no other children the next main reason for Priority Need. Table 25 shows this.



Table 26 - Priority Need reasons in Tamworth

	Jan-Mar 14	Apr – Jun 14	Jul – Sep14	Oct- Dec 14
Homeless emergency	0	0	0	0
Dependent children	17	12	26	18
Pregnant no other dependent child	2	2	1	5
16/17 year olds	0	0	0	2
Formally in care and aged between 18-20	0	1	1	0
Old age	1	0	0	0
Physical disability	0	0	1	3
Mental ill health	2	0	2	4
Drug dependency	0	0	1	0
Alcohol dependent	0	0	0	0

Former Asylum Seeker	0	0	0	0
Other special reason	0	0	0	1
Vulnerable because having been in care	0	0	0	0
Served in HM forces	0	0	0	1
Having been in custody or on remand	0	0	0	0
Fled home because of violence or threat of violence	3	0	3	4
Total	25	15	35	37

Source – P1e returns to the Department for Communities and Local Government

### 10.10.3 Prevention and Tamworth Borough Councils prevention tools

Tamworth Borough Council places an emphasis on the prevention of Homelessness and the number of cases of homelessness prevented through prevention activity has decreased in line with homeless applications and acceptances decreasing.

Table 27 - Homelessness Preventions - Tamworth Borough Council

	Prevented	Relieved	Total
2014 Total	140	21	161
Q4 2014	34	9	43
Q3 2014	50	1	51
Q2 2014	20	7	27
Q1 2014	36	4	40
2013 Total	120	14	134
Q4 2013	29	0	29
Q3 2013	41	0	41
Q2 2013	26	0	26
Q1 2013	24	14	38
2012 Total	153	2	155
Q4 2012	37	1	39
Q3 2012	35	0	35
Q2 2012	25	0	25
Q1 2012	56	1	57

Source P1e returns DCLG

#### Prevention Case Study

A referral from a health visitor was received to the Hospital to Home project who was working with a family who was over crowded and had issues around safety within the home, with a back door that didn't open correctly and no banister on the stairs. The mother (A) of the household was concerned for the safety of her son. The house was privately rented by A's mother-in-law who didn't want to report the issues to the private sector housing team because she rented from a friend and was concerned it would lead to eviction. A didn't want to declare herself homeless.

A's partner worked full time on a zero hours contract but had been working regularly and could prove a regular income, which would cover the cost of renting privately, but they could not afford a deposit.

From the Homeless Prevention Grant Tamworth Borough Council funded the cost of the deposit. A's family moved in to a private rented property.

### 10.10.4 Mortgage Rescue

The Mortgage Rescue Scheme was designed to support vulnerable owner-occupiers at risk of repossession to remain in their home. Funding of almost £200m was made

available through the Homes and Communities Agencies (HCA) Affordable Homes Programme to Registered Providers, who also contribute their own resources (supported by rent or equity loan charges).

There were approximately 150 partner providers working with the 19 Mortgage Rescue Lead Providers to deliver Mortgage Rescue across England, excluding London. (In London Mortgage Rescue was delivered by the Greater London Authority)

The Mortgage Rescue Scheme offered two distinct options – Mortgage to Rent where the household became a tenant of the provider; and Equity Loan where the household retained an element of ownership of their home.

### ***Mortgage to Rent***

Under this scheme the property was purchased by a Registered Provider and let to the household on, in most cases, a 3-year Assured Shorthold Tenancy with rent charged at up to 80% of market rent. Local Authorities and ALMO's could also take on Mortgage Rescue Properties.

### ***Equity Loan***

With this scheme the household's existing secured debt was reduced to an affordable level by an equity loan provided by the registered provider which reduced the monthly mortgage payments. The equity loan was secured as a second charge with an interest charge of 1.75% per annum. This fee will rise by RPI + 0.5% per annum.

In Tamworth for the period 2011 – 2014 there were 20 mortgage rescues completed. Table 27 shows this and where Tamworth sits in the HCA Midlands region.

*Table 28 – Mortgage Rescues across the Midlands Region*

Local Authority	Completions			
	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	TOTAL
Birmingham	15	20	7	42
Bromsgrove	3	1	1	5
Cannock Chase	4	9	2	15
Coventry	3	3	3	9

Dudley	7	10	11	<b>28</b>
East Staffordshire	6	4	3	<b>13</b>
Herefordshire	6	2	3	<b>11</b>
Lichfield	4	4	1	<b>9</b>
Malvern Hills	1			<b>1</b>
Newcastle-under-Lyme	8	4	1	<b>13</b>
North Warwickshire	1	1	1	<b>3</b>
Nuneaton and Bedworth	9	8	3	<b>20</b>
Redditch	5	6	2	<b>13</b>
Rugby		6	1	<b>7</b>
Sandwell	45	58	22	<b>125</b>
Shropshire	4	8	1	<b>13</b>
Solihull	7	8	2	<b>17</b>
South Staffordshire	4	4	1	<b>9</b>
Stafford	9	4	1	<b>14</b>
Staffordshire Moorlands	2	4	4	<b>10</b>
Stoke-on-Trent	4	4		<b>8</b>
Stratford-on-Avon	4	5	1	<b>10</b>
Tamworth	8	8	4	<b>20</b>
Telford and Wrekin	7	12	1	<b>20</b>
Walsall	12	15	4	<b>31</b>
Warwick	2	1		<b>3</b>
Wolverhampton	9	10	2	<b>21</b>
Worcester	3	1		<b>4</b>
Wychavon	3	1		<b>4</b>
Wyre Forest		3	2	<b>5</b>

(Source: [http://cfg.homesandcommunities.co.uk/mortgage\\_rescue\\_guidance](http://cfg.homesandcommunities.co.uk/mortgage_rescue_guidance))

Nationally the number and proportion of mortgages ending in repossession was lower in 2013 than in any year since 2007, according to data from the Council of Mortgage Lenders.

At 28,900, the number of repossessions nationally in 2013 represented 0.26% of outstanding mortgages, compared with 33,900 repossessions and a rate of 0.30% in 2012.

Repossessions have been falling steadily since their most recent peak in 2009 of 48,900 (0.43%).

Mortgage arrears have also declined. At the end of 2013, 1.29% of all mortgages were in arrears to the value of at least 2.5% of the loan balance (that is, at least

£2,500 arrears on a £100,000 loan). This compares with 1.40% of mortgages at the end of 2012, and a peak of 1.88% in the second quarter of 2009.

By the end of 2013, 28,700 mortgages (0.26% of all mortgages) were 10% or more in arrears, down from 29,200 at the end of the previous quarter and 28,900 at the end of 2012.

Despite this Tamworth was once again recognized as a repossession hotspot by Shelter in 2014. 82 owner occupiers were reposed from January to September 2014. Tamworth has the 9<sup>th</sup> highest rate of repossession in the region and 93<sup>rd</sup> within England.

To view the full shelter report click here:

[https://england.shelter.org.uk/data/assets/pdf\\_file/0020/1031816/2014 Repo Hots pots\\_September\\_Quarter\\_2014\\_Final.pdf](https://england.shelter.org.uk/data/assets/pdf_file/0020/1031816/2014_Repo_Hotspots_September_Quarter_2014_Final.pdf)

Mortgage Rescue ended in March 2014 and the identification of Tamworth as a Repossession hotspot, combined with forecast rises in interest rates this could result in more repossessions being seen in Tamworth, potentially putting some of the most vulnerable households at risk of homelessness.

#### **10.10.5 Mediation**

Mediation can be a useful tool in assisting parties to communicate more effectively and resolve differences that could lead to homelessness. Any mediation services offered to homeless households should adhere to the generally agreed principles of any mediation service, namely that the service should be confidential and voluntary, and that the mediator must be an impartial third party with no stake in the outcome of the process.

Given that of the main reason for homelessness in Tamworth is related to parental eviction the Council in particular offers mediation in all instances where this is given as the reason for the potential homelessness because of a breakdown in the relationship between a young person and their parents.

Mediation is optional and where it is refused these people are not discouraged from submitting a homeless application. There should also be an option for any young person to access Temporary Accommodation for the period of the mediation.

In 2014, 3 families engaged with the mediator at the Borough Council and all families have stayed together with no children later becoming homeless.

#### **10.10.6 Repossession Prevention Fund**

The Repossession Prevention Fund allows Tamworth Borough Council to offer grants or loans up to the value of £5,000 with the aim of preventing or relieving homelessness for 6 months or more. Traditionally the Repossession Prevention Fund has been offered as a loan but the scheme was reviewed and a grant option was included.

In 2014 10 applications were successful in applying for RPF funding. Of these 8 were grants and 2 were loans. Records suggest that 5 of these maintained their accommodation, with one moving to a different district.

#### **10.10.7 Spend to Save**

The Spend to Save fund is a small fund that offers grants of up to £500 to assist in the prevention of Homelessness. The money could be used for a number of reasons including a deposit on a private rented property where a person can afford the rent, but hasn't got the initial funds to secure the property.

#### **10.10.8 Households at risk of or experiencing domestic abuse, race or hate crimes**

Households at risk of or experiencing domestic abuse, race or hate crimes often have to leave their homes because of the risk of repeat incidents of abuse. Refuges and temporary accommodation can provide safe alternatives but many households for many reasons do not wish to leave their homes or would like to return home, despite the risks.

Tamworth Borough Council to address these issues have since 2007 offered Sanctuary measures to residents of the Borough who wished to remain in their own homes who were victims of these types of crimes.

Since the inception of the scheme there have been 21 Sanctuaries installed – this breaks down to 13 in Tamworth Borough Council properties, 1 in a Right to Buy property, 4 unknown which could be owner occupied, Registered Provider properties or Private Rented and 3 where the addresses are unknown.

The Scheme appears to have been on the whole a success as in all instances none of the households that have had Sanctuary Schemes installed have gone on to present as homeless. However, of the Tamworth Borough Council owned properties where measures have been installed a total of 5 households have since moved from the address where the sanctuary measures were installed. One tenant moved within a month of installation, the longest period that a tenant remained in a property after measures were installed was 21 months with an average of 10 months. In 6 of the cases where measures were installed in Tamworth Borough Council properties the tenant remained living in their property.

As a result of difficulties in securing a contractor to deliver the Sanctuary Scheme and a comprehensive review of the service the Council has taken the decision to fully assess the needs of the person accessing the service and their circumstances and offer a range of responses to these kinds of situations which could include sanctuary measures being installed in the property if they wish to remain living there, or working with the victim to take out legal measures to prevent the perpetrator from committing this type of crime again or, if the most appropriate solution is a house move, then work to move the victim.

In 2014 1 sanctuary scheme was fitted within the borough.

#### **10.10.9 Tamworth Homelessness Education Program (THEP)**

Tamworth Borough Council developed its Homelessness Education program as a response to the main reason given for homelessness in Tamworth being parental eviction and this has become a key prevention tool used by Tamworth Borough Council. The Tamworth Homelessness Education Programme is a specially designed series of sessions and resources which aims to work with children and young people to:



- Raise awareness of Homelessness
- Consider how it might feel to be without a home
- Challenge stereotypes of Homelessness
- Prevent young people in the Borough from leaving home in an unplanned way
- Identify where Homelessness is a risk that the young person knows the services that can be accessed for advice and support



The programme aims to visit all schools within the Borough delivering sessions to children and young people, complementing and contributing to their PSHE education. By experiencing a session this gives the children and young people an awareness of the subject matter, explores their thoughts and feelings about how it might feel to have no home, challenges stereotypes of homelessness and equips them with the knowledge of what to do and who they could approach if they ever found themselves in a position where they were either threatened with homelessness or found themselves homeless with the aim of preventing homelessness from happening.

The programme consists of a toolkit of sessions aimed at different age groups. All of the sessions are very interactive and engage the children and young people in discussion, debate and a range of activities.

The sessions, which have been accredited by Staffordshire County Council as a resource for use against the PSHE curriculum, all address the National Curriculum

and have session plans which clearly set out the learning aims and objectives and what it is hoped the children and young people will learn from participating in the session. Knowledge about the subject is assessed at the beginning and end of the sessions to determine if the learning aims and objectives of the session have been achieved.

During the period from March 2014 to April 2015, THEP delivered 65 sessions in total which consisted of:

- 16 sessions in Reception and Year Six sessions.
- 4 Senior School sessions.
- 2 sessions were delivered in prisons.
- 43 other sessions including 20 sessions delivered in South Staffordshire College Tamworth Campus.

It is estimated that approximately 2000 children, young people and offenders engaged with THEP.

Also in 2014 THEP developed 5 short films around different ways households can become homeless. Originally designed to act as a learning aid for the year six sessions, it soon became apparent that the films had a wider appeal. At a showcasing premiere event in the summer of 2014 the films were recognised by Shelter as an example of good practice in homeless education.

Link to shelters website: link to shelters website

[http://youngpeopleoutcomes.shelter.org.uk/news\\_and\\_publications/aug\\_2015/tamworth\\_homelessness\\_education\\_program\\_thep](http://youngpeopleoutcomes.shelter.org.uk/news_and_publications/aug_2015/tamworth_homelessness_education_program_thep)

The resources to accompany the film have now been accredited by Staffordshire county council as a PSHE resource, and have been implemented in schools since September 2014.

In addition to the schools program, following discussions with the National Offender Management Service (NOMS) and the National Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders (NACRO) a pilot session was developed initially to deliver to prisoners who were returning to Tamworth to look at their housing options and to

try and prevent prisoners from leaving prison homeless. And meet the following outcomes:

- Making prisoners aware of their responsibilities as tenants
- Ensuring prisoners are aware of their housing options on release
- Prisoners are given enough information to reassess their housing need and have enough information to make sensible decisions about their housing on release

To measure if this has worked we might expect to see reductions in presentations for advice or housing from ex offenders at point of release or offenders seeking advice to access the Private Rented Sector recognising that this is the only viable alternative to Social Housing.

Also during 2013-14 THEP was commissioned by the Shropshire and Staffordshire and Birmingham and the Black Country Single Homelessness project groups to deliver pilot THEP sessions in prisons for prisoners returning to the wider region. This was a pilot project funded for 18 sessions in prisons across the region and a full evaluation was undertaken at the end of the project to consider learning from the project and recommendations on the future of the project.

The full report is available here:

[http://www.tamworth.gov.uk/sites/default/files/housing\\_docs/Released-Rehoused-Evaluation-Report-Final.doc](http://www.tamworth.gov.uk/sites/default/files/housing_docs/Released-Rehoused-Evaluation-Report-Final.doc)

The funding for the prison project did not continue mainly due to the introduction of the transforming rehabilitation strategy which aims to reform the prison and rehabilitation process and has included the development of Community Rehabilitation Companies which will look after low and medium risk offenders and a national probation service which will manage high risk offenders.

## 10.11 Temporary Accommodation

During 2014 the numbers of households in Temporary Accommodation nationally was steadily rising from 58,410 in the first quarter rising to 61,970 by December 2014.

Tamworth Borough Council will provide Temporary Accommodation for a homeless person whilst they make enquires into the homelessness application.

This happens when the Council believes someone is:

- homeless or threatened with homelessness
- eligible for assistance
- in priority need.

The council has to provide temporary accommodation if all these apply, even if it suspects that the household may be homeless intentionally.

Tamworth Borough Council operates a private sector leasing scheme where it leases properties from landlords and uses these as temporary accommodation or utilises bed and breakfast (B&B)

Table 28 shows the number of households in Temporary Accommodation and the % change each year since 2012 compared to the West Midlands and National Figures.

Table 29 – Households in Temporary Accommodation

Quarter	Tamworth	% change	West Midlands	% change	National	% change
2012 Q1	10	0	1408	0	50420	0
2012 Q2	4	-60	1530	+6.7	51460	+2.1
2012 Q3	5	+25	1553	+3.3	52550	+2.1
2012 Q4	7	+40	1515	-2.5	53740	+2.7
2013 Q1	7	0	1671	+10.3	55290	+2.8
2013 Q2	11	+57	1668	-0.2	56100	+1.5
2013 Q3	10	-9	1544	-7.5	57030	+1.6
2013 Q4	13	+30	1489	-3.6	57560	+0.9
2014 Q1	7	-46	1500	+0.7	58360	+1.4
2014 Q2	14	+100	1512	+0.8	59410	+1.8
2014 Q3	15	+7	1654	+9.4	60570	+1.9
2014 Q4	22	+47	1496	-9.5	62600	-0.7

Source CLG specialist Advisor Toolkit

In the last quarter from October to December 2014 there were 22 households in Temporary Accommodation in Tamworth. The use of B&B reduced gradually to 0 in 2011. However numbers have begun to increase again from 2012 and after a spike in quarter 1 of 10 households, the number has gradually rose in the last three quarters of 2014 there were 14, 15, and then finally 22 households in Temporary Accommodation. Table 29 shows the numbers of households in Bed and Breakfast and Table 30 shows that in all instances households who are placed in B&B are stopping in B&B for less than 6 weeks which is in line with Government guidance. At the end of October Tamworth Borough Council had 10 people in Bed and Breakfast Accommodation and 4 in PSL properties

Table 30 - Households placed in Bed and Breakfast

	Tamworth	% of region	West Midlands	National
2012 Q1	3	1.2%	234	3960
2012 Q2	1	0.4%	246	4230
2012 Q3	0	0%	196	4120
2012 Q4	1	0.6%	169	3820
2013 Q1	0	0	264	4510
2013 Q2	5	2.0%	252	4330
2013 Q3	4	1.8%	216	4610
2013 Q4	8	4.0%	201	3920
2014 Q1	3	0.9%	309	4370
2014 Q2	9	3.4%	266	4610

2014 Q3	11	3.1%	352	4700
2014 Q4	15	8.9%	170	4560

Table 31 – Households in Bed and Breakfast and time spent there

	2011	2012	2013	2014
< 6 Months	35	0	0	Data unavailable
6 Months - < 1 Year	0	0	0	0
1 Year to < 2 Years	0	0	0	0
2 Years to < 3 Years	0	0	0	0
3 Years - < 4 Years	0	0	0	0
4 Years - < 5 Years	0	0	0	0
> 5 Years	0	0	0	0

Source: Specialist Advisor Toolkit 2012

There is a variety temporary accommodation within and outside the borough. Families and individuals may be offered temporary accommodation within or outside the borough, and those with no or low priority need may be offered hostel accommodation in Birmingham or Walsall. The council also have a PSL scheme (Private Sector Leasing Scheme) which offers temporary private rented accommodation for families experiencing homelessness. The new PSL policy (January 2015) states inline with Gold standard commitments that the agreed preference criteria is as follows:

1. 16-17 year olds
2. households with children
3. households with pregnant woman
4. Households with health conditions
5. Length of time in Temporary Accommodation

Approval has recently been given to extend the number of properties on the PSL scheme from 5 to 10 with the aim of reducing numbers of households accessing bed and breakfast accommodation. The council is currently under taking a full review of temporary accommodation and how this can be utilised more effectively to provide the council value for money, ensure standards and provide safe secure accommodation.

## **10.12 Needs of identified groups**

### **10.12.1 Complex needs**

Complex needs is a term used that encompasses people who have a combination of medical needs (e.g. diagnosis, treatment and rehabilitation) and social needs (e.g. housing, social care and independent living) that require a lot of additional support to live day-by-day. People with complex needs often require a range of health and social care services, but can still lead their own lives with the right support in place.

Homeless people with complex needs are disproportionately some of the most likely to engage erratically with services. The current government strategy, 'No health without mental health', makes clear that the 'provision of fully integrated care' is vital to treating patients, and that it is keen to actively promote and support improvements in commissioning service provision for this group'. Additionally Making Every Contact Count makes it clear that homelessness is more than a housing issue and requires a partnership approach to early identification and the prevention of homelessness.

Failing to engage with those with Complex Needs, it is likely that they will have little choice but to resort to costly and reactive emergency services to receive the help they need. Homeless link have looked at dual needs, those with mental health and drug/alcohol issues and found that on average, 55% of the people with dual needs surveyed across five areas, where they are currently undertaking an innovation project, had been to A&E at least once in the last six months, with a significant proportion visiting multiple times. People with Complex Needs are often a small number of people but access crisis services the most and frequently.

### **10.12.2 Rough Sleepers**

Although Rough Sleepers often experience Complex Needs and estimates show that the numbers of rough sleepers in Tamworth are relatively small, given the

Government emphasis on this group with the publishing of No Second Night Out, they are one of the most vulnerable groups in society. Rough sleepers are likely to have a range of complex problems and support needs which can be worsened by living on the streets or insecure accommodation.

Rough sleeping counts and estimates are undertaken each year and are a single night snapshot of the number of people sleeping rough in local authority areas. Local authorities determine whether to carry out a count or an estimate. They are encouraged to gain intelligence for street counts and estimates from local agencies such as outreach workers, the police, the voluntary sector and members of the public who have contact with rough sleepers on the street.

Tamworth undertook its last Rough Sleeper estimate in partnership with Lichfield District Council and in collaboration with key partners who may have had contact with Rough Sleepers in November 2014 when it was estimated that 2 people were sleeping rough in Tamworth. Table 31 shows the number of rough sleepers across Tamworth has remained static consistently over the last 4 years at a time when Rough Sleeping is on the increase nationally.

*Table 32 – Numbers of Rough Sleepers in Tamworth compared to the region and nationally*

	<b>Tamworth</b>	<b>% of region</b>	<b>West Midlands</b>	<b>National</b>
2005/06	0	0.0%	13	502
2006/07	0	0.0%	13	498
2007/08	0	0.0%	18	483
2008/09	0	0.0%	15	457
2009/10	2	1.1%	182	1,766
2010/11	3	1.4%	207	2,181
2011/12	3	1.3%	230	2,309
2012/13	3	1.3%	233	2,414
2013/14	2	1.1%	186	2,744

Source: CLG Specialist Advisor Toolkit

The Government Report No Second Night Out sets out the Governments Commitment to tackle Homelessness for single people not in priority need, including those who are rough sleeping. This aims to ensure that when people hit crisis point and come onto the streets, there is a swift and effective response from services and the aim is to end all forms of rough sleeping but where new Rough Sleepers come



onto the street for one night there should be no need for them to have a second night out. The pilot was initially trialled in London but has now been rolled out across the Country with the aim of moving Rough Sleepers off the streets more quickly

### **10.12.3 No Second Night Out in Tamworth**

Tamworth Borough Council as a local authority participates in the West Midlands Regional Homelessness Forum and has signed up to a region wide commitment to No Second Night out – which sets out the Councils commitment to the principles of No Second Night Out and identifies what the Councils offer in relation to this, and how the Council has modified its existing services for No second Night Out.

As set out in this standard the key services in place in Tamworth to try and end Rough Sleeping and to ensure where it does happen that no-one has to spend a second night out on the streets are:

- To provide one point of contact for reporting Rough Sleepers – Any reports of Rough Sleepers via any channel including Street Link, Local Faith Groups, reports from CCTV all come in via Tamworth Borough Councils Housing Solutions Team. These are then referred to Brighter Futures who currently are providing an outreach service for Rough Sleepers in the Borough, who will then work with the Rough Sleeper to access support services and accommodation.
- The Outreach Service provided by Brighter Futures, is a Sub Regional response to the Governments No Second Night Out Agenda, funded by the Shropshire, Staffordshire Housing Partnership and the Homeless Transition Fund until 2016.
- Co-ordination of the RS Count - Tamworth Borough Council usually work in partnership with Lichfield District Council for the Rough Sleeper count. This is due to historical and anecdotal evidence that rough sleepers move between the two Boroughs accessing different services. Homeless Link usually co-ordinate the regions count dates so all local authorities are aware of what others are doing.

- Co-ordination of Cold Weather Provision – All local authorities offer Emergency cold weather provision, and although this isn't co-ordinated centrally by any organisation, local authorities notify partners during cold weather provision to ensure those who need accommodating are informed about the provision.
- Offer personalised solutions and individual budgets – Currently Tamworth Borough Council does not offer personalised solutions or individual budgets for rough sleepers. However the Brighter Futures Outreach team can access funding for personalised budgets for rough sleepers.
- Facilitate Reconnection – The West Midlands regional homeless forum also have a reconnection protocol which is currently being finalised and will request local authority signup. The protocols is particular important for when placing individuals out of area in emergency hostel accommodation to ensure they go back to where they are from to access the appropriate housing and support.

#### **10.12.4 Women Rough Sleepers**

Traditionally male rough sleeping has been the focus of research, yet evidence suggests that there are differences between the male and female rough sleeping population. Within current Government legislation there is no specific mention of Women Rough Sleepers; there seems to be uncertainty of the extent of the problem, work related to Rough Sleepers tends not to be specific to women and there is a lack of training specific to women Rough Sleepers.

In Tamworth, the 2012 Rough Sleepers estimate identified that one of the 3 Rough Sleepers in Tamworth was a woman and prior to that during 2011 Tamworth Borough Council had contact with a Woman Rough Sleeper. Although this is a low number this is relatively a high proportion in relation to the wider Rough Sleeper population in Tamworth. No women Rough Sleepers were identified in the 2013 and 2014 counts. However one woman has been identified as sleeping rough during 2015.

Women often rough sleep for different reasons to men with 70% of those interviewed in research into Women Rough Sleepers undertaken by the University of

Wolverhampton saying that abuse from a partner was what had led them to Rough Sleeping, either by a partner or family.

### 10.12.5 Young People

The Council accepted a homelessness duty to 3 young people aged 16/17 years of age in 2014. This number is significantly less than 2013 when 6 young people were accepted as homeless. In 2012 the council accepted the homeless duty of 45 young people aged 16-24.

The main reason for homelessness in this age group was parents or friends and relatives no longer willing to accommodate. As of May 2015 there are 304 young people on the Housing List waiting for housing aged 16 – 24 years of age. Table 32 shows the breakdown by age.

*Table 33 - Applicants by age in Tamworth*

Age	Number on Council Waiting List for Housing
16	3
17	6
18	25
19	40
20	28
21	30
22	43
23	47
24	46
25	36
<b>Total</b>	<b>304 (20% of the total waiting list)</b>

Source Orchard Housing System

### Mediation Case Study

A 16 year old X was referred from the local college. X had recently moved in with her father and step mother and the relationship had broken down between X and Step mum. It appeared that X was “resentful” towards her stepmother. Two home visits were undertaken. X was very difficult to engage to begin with. The mediator arranged for X to return to her Mum for half term to give Dad and Step mum breathing space and continue with mediation. 3<sup>rd</sup> Session on the telephone completed and to date applicant has remained with Dad and Step mum.

There are currently 32 units of supported housing specifically for young people at Tamworth Cornerstone Housing Association

Tamworth Borough Council also has a number of supported housing units but these are not exclusively for use of Young People. This service is provided to help homeless people: single, single parent families or couples with or without children and provides temporary accommodation and support. Tamworth Borough Councils supported housing units are:

- Chestnut Court – 8 units: 5 x 2 bedroom and 3 x 1 bedroom
- Edenfield Place – 4 units: 4 x 2 bedroom
- Ellerbeck – 8 units – 8 x 2 bedroom

However Tamworth has also seen the closure of two shared houses providing 9 units of supported accommodation for young people, 5 units of supported housing and 4 units of move on accommodation.

#### County Protocol for Homeless Young People aged 16 and 17

Staffordshire County Council working with the district and borough Councils are currently developing a county wide protocol for homeless young people aged 16 and 17. Local Authorities and housing providers are currently developing the protocol to ensure that young people who present as homeless are managed successfully as recent case law judgements have recognised that this hasn't often been the case. In line with legislation and good practice as well as meeting the aims of gold standard to stop young people accessing bed and breakfast the protocol is currently with Staffordshire County Council (October 2015) for approval when it will then be signed up to by the district and borough councils.

#### **10.12.6 Ex-offenders and people at risk of offending and imprisonment**

The link between re-offending and homelessness is well documented.

Between January and December 2012 there were 4 prisoners released with no fixed abode (NFA), 2 from Birmingham and 2 from Dovegate back to Tamworth there were an additional 4 offenders released in 2013.

NOMS figures for 2014 show 5 offenders were released NFA within the West Midlands in Tamworth. However a further 61 offenders from this group were also NFA but had not identified any local authority to return to. So there could be considerably more than this figure. Also these figures are only from the West Midlands so there maybe other offenders from outside the area who have also returned to Tamworth NFA.

### **Integrated Offender Management (IOM) Tamworth**

The IOM in Tamworth manages the most persistent and problematic offenders identified by joint partners working together within the borough. The key principles of IOM are:

- All partners manage offenders together
- To deliver a local response to local problems
- With all offenders potentially in scope
- Facing up to their responsibilities or facing up the consequences.
- Best use made of existing programmes and governance arrangements
- To achieve long term distance from crime

(Source: Integrated Offender Management Key Principles February 2015)

Tamworth IOM have a very good working relationship with the Housing Solutions Team, currently as of February 2015 Tamworth IOM were managing 59 offenders, of those 4 were homeless.

#### **Case study**

B has been in and out of custody over a number of years and repeatedly presented to Tamworth Borough Council as homeless on release from custody. B was referred to hostel in Birmingham. This broke down within 7 days. B was then referred to Salt Box in Stoke this placement too broke down within 7 days. B unfortunately returned to custody. IOM referred back to Tamworth Borough Council and liaised regularly on expected date of release. B then went from custody into hospital. B was referred to Derventio and accepted to date B remains in accommodation in Tamworth.

### **10.12.7 People with disabilities**

Disability can cover a range of needs including:

- learning difficulties
- mental health problems

- mobility
- sensory impairment
- developmental disability

Some of those who present as homeless could have an undiagnosed disability. Learning difficulties are particularly under-reported and not always formally recognised or recorded.

As discussed earlier the Welfare Reform Act 2012 ushers in significant changes across all welfare benefits. Disability Living Allowance (DLA) has now ceased and has been replaced with Personal Independence Payments (PIP). PIP will consist of two components: a Daily Living component and a Mobility component. Each of these components will have two rates, a standard rate and an enhanced rate.

Everyone of working age currently receiving DLA will be asked by letter between April 2013 and March 2016 if they would like to make a claim for PIP. From April 2013 all new claims will be for PIP. There will be no automatic transfer from one benefit to the other; those receiving DLA will have to make a fresh claim for PIP, and be reassessed in line with its new entitlement criteria.

The percentage of people claiming disability living allowance is higher than average in Tamworth (6.1% or around 4,700 people) compared with England (4.9%). (Source: Health and Wellbeing Profile Tamworth 2015)

The estimated numbers of people suffering mental ill-health in Tamworth is between 16,000 and 19,100 people. Diagnoses of depression are slightly higher than the national average with 8% of adults in Tamworth being diagnosed. In terms of severe mental health conditions (schizophrenia, bipolar disorder or other psychoses), the recorded prevalence in Tamworth was 0.7% in 2013/14 which is lower than the England average of 0.9%. (source: Tamworth Health and Wellbeing Profile 2015)

In Tamworth there are around five suicides every year accounting for about 1% of deaths with rates being similar to the national average. Self-harm is often an expression of personal distress and there is a significant and persistent risk of future suicide following an episode of self-harm. During 2012/13 there were around 130

hospital admissions due to self-harm in Tamworth with rates being similar to the England average. (Source: Health and Well Being Profile for Tamworth 2015)

Services across Staffordshire have been closed which previously treated mental health patients, and offered accommodation for the those with mental health issues.

### **10.12.8 People at risk of domestic abuse**

Domestic abuse has a tremendous impact upon society not only in terms of the pain and suffering experienced by the victim and their family, but also in terms of the costs to public services and the local community. The cost of the “average” domestic abuse case has been estimated at £14,000 and this does not take into account longer term costs of unemployment, housing and social services. The total cost to public services (criminal justice system, health, social services, housing and civil legal) per annum has been estimated at £3.1 billion per year and the loss to the economy at £2.7 billion.

Nationally it is recorded that:

- Two women a week are killed by a current or former partner;
- One in four women and one in six men will experience domestic abuse at some point in their lives;
- Victims are likely to experience 35 incidents of abuse before reporting it
- As many as 963,000 children and young people in the UK could be living with the effects of Domestic Abuse

Domestic abuse also has a significant impact upon individuals, their families and communities within Staffordshire:

- In 2010-11 there were 3,034 domestic abuse crimes recorded by Staffordshire Police
- Nearly 9,000 calls were made to the three main domestic abuse support services in Staffordshire during 2010-11; an increase of 40% from the previous year
- During 2010-11 854 domestic abuse cases were referred to Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARACs), of which 141 were repeat cases (16.5%)
- 1078 children were living in the households of the individuals referred to MARAC equal to 1.3 per case

- There were 1,283 incidents of domestic violent crime with injury in 2010-11 (24% of all violence with injury)
- There were 46 incidents of serious domestic violent crime in 2010-11
- 85% of offenders suspected/accused of domestic related crime are male
- Young women 18-23 years old are most at risk
- The peak age for victims and offenders is 20-24 years old

Statistics tell us that in 2010-2011 in Staffordshire there were just fewer than 1300 crimes (1283) of domestic violence that resulted in injury reported to the police; of these, 46 crimes resulted in serious injury. These figures show a reduction from the 2009-10 figures when there were 1318 crimes of domestic violence with injury, including 47 crimes of domestic violence with serious injury. Over the same two years (2009-2011) Staffordshire has seen a reduction in the number of repeat domestic abuse cases considered by MARACs with a repeat rate of 24.2% in 2009-10 against a target of 28% and a repeat rate for 2010-11 of 16.5% against a target of 27%. It is also accepted that there are many incidents which go unreported to the Police due to fear of reprisal, personal embarrassment or a lack of knowledge about where to go and who to talk to. Over the last few years partners across Staffordshire have been working to break down the barriers to reporting and encourage those affected to seek help. Therefore trends in reported incidents can sometimes be difficult to interpret, as it is not always clear whether an increase is due to a true rise in the level of abuse or an increase in the number of victims willing to report the offence.

#### **10.12.9 Tamworth context**

In Tamworth from the periods 1<sup>st</sup> April 2013 to the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2014 there were 516 domestic crimes. There were 384 violent domestic crimes. This represents 36.8% of the total number of domestic crimes and 32.7% of all violent crimes. There were 4 serious violent crime and injury offences that were in a domestic context. (Source: Staffordshire Police)

199 offenders were male in domestic crimes, or 38.6% although not all crimes have named offenders listed against them so this number could be higher. The highest numbers off offenders by age group is 18-29 and this is also true for victims.

The districts with the highest rates of domestic violent crime with injury in Staffordshire were Tamworth (2.23 per 1,000) and Cannock (2.16 per 1,000)



There has been a 32% reduction in domestic abuse (157 fewer reported crimes) compared with 2010/11. In 2011/12, 25% of violent crime in Tamworth Borough was profiled as being domestic in nature, a reduction from the previous year (33%). The overall trend for reported domestic abuse offences has remained relatively stable over the past 2 years. This is not in line with the reduction in overall violence, which could be viewed as positive in terms of people reporting offences due to increased awareness.

34% of recorded domestic abuse in Tamworth is profiled as alcohol related. This is significantly higher than the proportion of overall violent crime that is alcohol related (25%), and demonstrates that alcohol is often a significant risk factor in this type of offending.

Whilst anyone of any age is at risk of domestic abuse, females are almost five times as likely to be victims of this type of crime in Tamworth Borough, with women and girls between the ages of 15 and 29 years most at risk in the Borough. This age range experiences more than half of all domestic abuse, but accounts for just 19% of the population. Males between the age of 35 and 39 years are also disproportionately at risk.

9 families were homeless as a result of abuse in 2014.

**65% of all alcohol related violent offences against females were domestic in nature, compared with just 18% of alcohol related offences against males.**

#### **10.12.10 People with alcohol and drug problems**

Drug use culture has altered in recent years. There has been a sharp rise of 20% in drug related deaths. There has also been an increase nationally in the use of Cocaine, ecstasy ketamine and “legal highs” a new psychoactive substances but that hasn't been fully mapped is being widely used. (Source: <http://www.drugscope.org.uk/Media/Press+office/pressreleases/Drug+treatment+figures+show+the+system+is+performing+well+but+under+growing+pressure>)

National figures around alcohol include:

- 61% of men and 72% of women in 2011 had either drunk no alcohol in the last week, or had drunk within the recommended levels on the day they drank the most alcohol. This was most common among men and women aged 65 or over.
- 64% of men drank no more than 21 units weekly, and 63 per cent of women drank no more than 14 units weekly in 2011.
- 12% of school pupils had drunk alcohol in the last week in 2011. This continues a decline from 26 per cent in 2001, and is at a similar level to 2010, when 13 per cent of pupils reported drinking in the last week.
- In 2011/12, there were 200,900 admissions where the primary diagnosis was attributable to the consumption of alcohol (the narrow measure). This is a 1 per cent increase since 2010/11 when there were 198,900 admissions of this type and a 41 per cent increase since 2002/03 when there were around 142,000 such admissions.
- In 2012, there were 178,247 prescription items prescribed for the treatment of alcohol dependence in primary care settings or NHS hospitals and dispensed in the community. This is an increase of 6 percent on the 2011 figure (167,764) and an increase of 73 percent on the 2003 figure (102,741).

Source: Health and Social Care statistics on Alcohol

Locally in Staffordshire 2.9% of applicants wait for more than 3 weeks to access drug treatment, similarly the alcohol waiting list for treatment for more than 3 weeks is 34.5%. Once treatment is accessed 6.9% of those being treated for opiate drug use complete the course and 38.9% complete non opiate drug use treatments. 44.9% complete alcohol treatment. Staffordshire also high numbers of alcohol related admissions according to Public Health England mapped services across counties in England. The report claimed that Staffordshire is performing “worse” than

neighbouring authorities who are performing “better” (Leicestershire) or “consistently” (Derbyshire).

The local drug and alcohol service in Tamworth provided anecdotal evidence that suggested people seeking support for alcohol issues has increased particularly amongst females. Additionally the Criminal Justice System has seen an increase in the use of legal highs, however because they are termed “legal highs” less people are seeking help because there is an assumption that these are safe. There also has been a change in trends with users now favouring non opiate drugs over opiates.

Source: One Recovery Tamworth

### 10.12.11 Teenage parents

Tamworth in recent years has had high rates in teenage pregnancy/parents however figures suggest that since 1998 to 2012 under 18 conception rates in Tamworth have reduced by 21%, and have reduced by 31% across Staffordshire. Figure 7 compares teenage pregnancy figures, in Tamworth, Staffordshire, West Midlands and England.

Figure 7 – Comparison on Teenage Pregnancy Figures.



Source: Tamworth Health and Wellbeing profile 2014

Despite the reduction, rates teenage pregnancy continues to be higher in Tamworth than other areas of Staffordshire, and the national average. 19% of the under 18

pregnancies are under 16, which again is also significantly higher than the county and the national average.

*Source: Office for National Statistics and Department for Education cited Tamworth Health and wellbeing profile 2014*

### **Conceptions and live births**

Nationally live birth rates have fallen in 2013 from 729,674 for to 698,512. This is the lowest drop in live births since 1975. The rate of still births is 4.7 per thousand, which is a drop from 4.9 in the previous year. The average age of mothers nationally for their first child is 30. One in five woman over 45 now do not have children.

Locally there are on average around 1,030 live births annually to women living in Tamworth. Fertility rates in Tamworth are higher than the England average, with rates in Stonydelph, Glascote and Bolehall wards being particularly high.

Infant mortality rates nationally have continued to fall since 1982 and there are now only 4.0 deaths for every 1000 babies born. Women under 20 are most likely to suffer the death of an infant with woman over 40 next likely. Multiple births, low birth weights and smoking are influential factors in infant mortality. *Source: Office of National statistic*

Between 1999-2001 and 2011-2013, infant mortality rates in Tamworth have fluctuated due to small numbers; however rates in Tamworth have remained similar to the England average throughout this period.

*Source: Tamworth Health and Wellbeing Profile 2015*

### **10.12.12 Elderly people**

The Housing Act 1996 makes provision for people who are vulnerable due to old age to be considered priority homeless. However there is not a specific age at which people are considered vulnerable due to old age.

In many areas sheltered housing is under less pressure than other forms of social housing. Older people who present as homeless may be offered a sheltered tenancy. If they are owed a duty the accommodation must be suitable and for older homeless people this is not always appropriate. Their needs may be too complex and they may need supported housing or accommodation with care.

In 2014 1 person over the age of 60 presented as homeless, this number could be low due to Tamworth having a large amount of sheltered and supported accommodation for over 55's as currently there are 365 units, which there is usually some availability.

#### **10.12.13 Young Homeless families with support needs**

There are two projects in Tamworth that can offer support to families who are homeless, and have small children or are pregnant. These projects are offered by Bromford and Home Start. Families are supported to learn the skills to live independently and then are encouraged to access independent private or social rented housing.

#### **10.12.14 Young Single Homeless people**

For young single homeless people there is Tamworth Cornerstone Housing Association, which offers 32 units of accommodation. Tenants move through stages of accommodation until they reach semi-independence in their own self contained flat. Again like with the homeless families they are supported through regular support meetings, training courses and gaining appropriate life skills to live independently and then move on in to the community.

Tamworth Borough Council Housing Solutions team makes direct referrals in to supported accommodation. Access is based on criteria determined by the provider. The accommodation provider can also take self referrals and referrals from other agencies or organisations.

Until recently all of these accommodation providers have received funding from Supporting People to operate. However since cuts to the supporting people budget funding is now coming from intensive housing management budget. Intensive Housing Management funding does not offer the same levels as supporting people which may mean that more vulnerable young people may not be able to access supported accommodation.

#### **10.12.15 Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Show People**

There are currently no authorised sites for use by Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Show People in Tamworth.

Favoured option for Gypsies and Travellers was small private sites followed by travelling and moving onto authorised sites outside the borough. Anecdotal evidence suggests that gypsies and travellers who have recently visited Tamworth have camped illegally in the castle grounds in the town centre.

Tamworth Borough Councils approach is to provide sites where a need is seen to arise. The 2011 Census identifies that there are 9 gypsies, travellers and travelling show people living in Tamworth accommodation.

#### Case A

Former care leaver aged 19, from out of borough. Applicant moved through a number of HMO tenancies some in the name of the applicant some in the partner's name. All tenancies failed because of ASB, offending behaviour, substance misuse and DV leaving the applicant and partner street sleeping for a while. Several multi agency case conferences were called to seek appropriate support for the applicant from social services and / or other agencies with very limited success. Applicant would fail to engage or do so only sporadically before returning to previous behaviour patterns. Applicant offered TBC accommodation & the tenancy failed within 1 week. Applicant placed in several different types of temporary accommodation by both housing and social services, with and without support and all broke down within a matter of a couple of weeks.

Following a multi agency meeting applicant was offered TBC supported accommodation with a comprehensive support package in place. Applicant has maintained this accommodation with very intensive support from on site staff.

#### Case B

Single male in his mid 30's who presented following a relationship breakdown. Applicant had some medical issues but the GP letters didn't explain the confused and unpredictable presentation of the applicant. Numerous letters and calls to the applicant's GP to attempt to understand the full medical situation to try and establish a reason for the presenting vulnerability. None of which received a response. Several multi agency meetings called by TBC.

Applicant placed into TA on many occasions all of which he lost due to erratic and unpredictable behaviour. Some short spells in custody following minor offences, short periods of hospitalisation and some periods of street sleeping. All professionals involved agreed that the applicant presented as a vulnerable adult but he was not known to Adult services and when assessed failed to meet the necessary criteria. Applicant died in TA before all medical issues were made known to TBC.

## **11. The Health of Homeless People**

Homeless people are one of the groups most excluded from health services yet they often have the highest level of health need. Often these go undiagnosed or untreated and without good health, achieving other outcomes such as stable accommodation and securing employment can be difficult.

As well as identifying that the life expectancy of a homeless person is significantly less than the national and local average the report called *Homelessness: A Silent Killer* published in 2012 by Crisis also identifies the following as trends amongst the homelessness population:

- Drug and alcohol abuse are amongst the most common causes of death
- A Homeless person is 9 times as likely to commit suicide
- Road Traffic Accidents are 3 times more likely

In addition a report from the Department of Health called *Healthcare for Single Homeless people* identifies that:

- Infections and incidences of falls are also higher for example rates of chronic chest and breathing problems are 3 times more common, and rough sleepers experience TB at 200 times that of the known rate among the general population.

Commitment in NSNO

### **Commitment 2: Helping people to access healthcare**

#### **Government will:**

- Support Health and Wellbeing Boards to ensure that the needs of vulnerable groups are better reflected in Joint Strategic Needs Assessments
- highlight the role of specialist services in treating homeless people, including those with a dual diagnosis of co-existing mental health and drug and alcohol problems

- work with the National Inclusion Health Board and the NHS, local government and others to identify what more must be done to include the needs of homeless people in the commissioning of health services.

Homeless people have some of the poorest health within the population. Data suggests around 84% homeless rough sleepers have one or more physical health need, and 87% have a mental health problem. (Source: Homeless Link Manifesto to end Homelessness) The disengagement with health services means that often homeless people are only treated in crisis often for health conditions that are on the most part easily treated but have become severe due to their homeless lifestyles, homeless people are 4 times more likely to access emergency treatment than the general population.

In addition to this 45% of homeless people have been diagnosed with a mental health issue. 39% are recovering from a drug problem and 27% are recovering from an alcohol problem. In contrast to this half of homeless people said they used drugs to cope with a mental health issues and 2/3 consumed more alcohol than the recommended amount.



## **12. What is the evidence telling us?**

The evidence discussed suggest that currently the UK is in a period of unprecedented change and all sectors are needing to adapt to these changes, as the Austerity measures will continue.

In response to this local authorities needs to consider what budgets are being spent, and to work in partnership with other agencies and organisations to deliver a streamlined and efficient service without duplication of resources.

Changes to benefits are likely to impact on the most vulnerable, as will loss of funding for services. Benefit sanctions are increasing essentially making it hard for the most vulnerable and chaotic to maintain their benefit payments. Also as universal credits are introduced and people will be expected to manage more money they have ever had before there is likely to be an increase in rent arrears as people fail to pay their rents which could result in more evictions and homelessness.

As fixed term tenancies are reviewed, Tamworth Borough Council along with registered providers need a clear pathway for tenants that either need moving on due to a change in family dynamics, or who now have the affordability to access the private rented sector or home ownership. Incentives could be offered by RP's for tenants to access shared ownership housing, or housing offered at affordable rent. A clear system will need to established in a reasonable time frame so work can be done with the current residence preparing them for the change in their housing.

Tamworth Borough Council is currently developing a policy to allow it to discharge its duty into the PRS, which will clearly set out how the Council will do this. Accessing the private rented sector is going to be essential to the prevention of homelessness.

As the older population increases this may have a significant effect on the housing stock. Tamworth Borough Council are currently developing an ageing well strategy which will consider the needs of older people as the population in Tamworth ages. Also supported housing could be severely affected if more supported people cuts are made, which may result in an increase in rent for the tenants within these properties. There are also very few places available in extra care schemes across the county for those suffering with dementia and Alzheimer's and some additional provision may be needed for these members of the population.

14% of Tamworth's population fall within the most deprived fifth of areas in England. Welfare reform, including the bedroom tax and the increased sanctioning of benefits could result in this number rising, and again could increase levels of homelessness within the borough.

There is a large pay gap within the wards of Tamworth, and men are paid considerably more than woman across the borough. Although unemployment is down across the town there are lower than average earnings, and a large proportion of residence are on low incomes. In parallel to this due to the size of the borough housing prices are at a premium making home ownership difficult for those on low earnings. This increases the demand on social housing (most affordable) and the private rented sector, (less affordable but more accessible) for young families and individuals looking to live independently.

Evidence suggests that homeownership, rivate renting and even affordable rents are unaffordable for some, leaving social rent the only affordable option placing an increased demand on council stock, which is decreasing due to right to buy. Additionally in the 2015 post election summer budget the chancellor announced 1% decrease in social housing rents, and for those households earning over £30,000 outside of London, and living in social housing would be required to pay market rents on their property.

Coupled with this is the shift to universal credits, and for those who struggle to manage money may mean an increase in rent arrears and council tax arrears, as more and more tenants on benefits will be expected to contribute to their council tax bill. All of this could see an increase in evictions, and debt and an increased demand in households requiring emergency housing and support.

Nationally homelessness is on the increase. Therefore we need to have a continued emphasis on early intervention and prevention methods to reduce the numbers of households reaching crisis point.

Tamworth Borough is still a repossession hot spot and we need to have procedures in place to manage this, despite the mortgage rescue scheme now ending, the council needs to consider other similar tools which could be offered to owner occupiers facing repossession.

Youth homelessness statistics suggest parental eviction as the main reason for homelessness. As a council we need to continue and increase the mediation offered to families in crisis. It may also be useful to develop Temporary Accommodation specifically for young people which will offer young people safe accommodation whilst looking for something more permanent or allow short term respite while mediation or other intervention can take place.

Tamworth Homelessness Education Program needs to continue in schools and alternative education establishments and further and higher education.

To prove the worth of prevention methods the housing solutions team needs clear mechanisms for gathering appropriate data so that value for money can be clearly quantified. This will be particularly useful when budget cuts are being considered, and it will offer a clear business case for prevention activity.

Since 2008 the use of Temporary accommodation and particularly Bed and Breakfast have risen significantly this is for a variety of reasons, including the number of homelessness applications increasing, the number of properties on the PSL is only 4 and PSL review has been completed which has recommended the expansion of the scheme. Also there is less council housing available for those in need to access, and the demand on 1 and 2 bed properties continues to increase. There has also been a move to not leave families in Bed and Breakfast Temporary accommodation for longer than six weeks increasing the demand on PSL and the housing register. Schemes like hospital to home are also identifying clients who may not have been identified in the past or who would have accessed housing solutions services at crisis point.

The demand for council housing outstrips supply, however there is now a larger demand for smaller property and larger properties are less in demand. This may be because of the under occupancy charge, and also that utility costs continue to rise. Families too are getting smaller, and fewer couples are having children meaning they would only require a one bed property.

Also as the fixed term tenancies start to come to an end households will be expected to move if their financial situation or household has changed.

In response to a recognised need to deliver services specifically for those with Complex needs Tamworth Borough Council has commissioned Brighter Futures to deliver a support service for those who may be in crisis.

Tamworth Borough Council is also a key partner on the Tamworth Vulnerability Partnership which is a weekly meeting that professionals can attend raising awareness of their cases of vulnerable clients gaining input from other professionals who maybe working with the same clients or have done historically. Although the partnership isn't specifically about housing it gives an indication on the numbers of vulnerable households within the borough.

The number of rough sleepers within Tamworth is relatively low, however Tamworth Borough Council is committed to ending Rough Sleeping in the Borough by 2020.

Tamworth Borough Council already has an outreach team which is currently delivered by Brighter Futures supporting and connecting with rough sleepers in the borough. Public awareness should be raised around rough sleepers so that the public can confidently report a rough sleeper knowing that the appropriate support will be offered.

Tamworth Borough Council already offers an emergency cold weather provision for rough sleepers during winter. There also needs to be the development and imbedding of the reconnection protocol which can offer rough sleepers reconnection to their former area if they are from outside of Tamworth.

Tamworth Borough Council needs to develop a clear pathway for supporting young people aged 16/17. Currently the county is developing a protocol for 16/17 year olds. Tamworth Borough Council needs to develop a good working relationship with social service teams supporting young people so that there a joint working arrangement in place and so that young people receive an effective service. Tamworth Borough Council needs to develop a pathway to accommodation for all young people so that there is a clear protocol for staff to follow. This pathway should consider universal provision through the homelessness education program, to moving on from supported accommodation in to suitable social or private rented sector housing. This pathway can be inclusive for up to age 25.

THEP could also increase its role by working with the Building Resilient Families team with identified families who are known to authorities and who may become homeless.

Similar to young people it would be helpful if there could be an accommodation pathway for offenders. The link between re offending and housing is high so to offset this, Tamworth Borough Council need to ensure that offenders are housed quickly and suitably and be able to receive support within the community where this is necessary.

Tamworth has the highest rates of Domestic Abuse within Staffordshire and there is currently a good support network for woman and families experience including hostel accommodation as well as other types of support such as floating support.

### **13. Next steps**

Once the strategy review is complete it will be shared with partners for consultation. The finding of the review will contribute to the draft homelessness strategy consultation will again take place for with partners and the public.

Once the strategy has been finalised it will go to cabinet for approval, and once approval has been finalised a project group will be set up to monitor the delivery of the strategy.

With the Homelessness Strategy remaining a stand alone statutory requirement, it is recommended wherever possible that Local Authorities have a distinct Strategy for the prevention of Homelessness and this is monitored by a partnership such a local Homelessness Forum, with local partnership sign off and clear links to the authorities corporate frameworks including other strategies.

## Appendices

## Appendices



West Midlands Homelessness Forum

### West Midlands “No Second Night Out” Standard: 2013 onwards

**Our vision is that no one will live on the streets of West Midlands and no individual arriving on the streets for the first time will sleep out for more than one night.**

**This is a West Midlands wide commitment and is endorsed in principle by the following Local Authorities and partner agencies:**

**List authorities when its done**

**Endorsing this as a region, and delivering this via sub-regions, will help us to achieve our commitment. It will enhance how Local Authorities and partners across the sub-regions and region work together in a co-ordinated way; pooling skills, resources and intelligence.**

**For the purpose of this standard, a rough sleeper is:**

People sleeping, about to bed down (sitting on/in or standing next to their bedding) or actually bedded down in the open air (such as on the streets, in tents (inappropriate use of tents), doorways, parks, bus shelters or encampments). People in buildings or other places not designed for habitation (such as stairwells, barns, sheds, car parks, cars, derelict boats, stations, or “bashes”). Definition taken from Evaluating the Extent of Rough Sleeping. Communities and Local Government September 2010

We will also use the following sub definitions to identify the extent of the issue:

**New Rough Sleepers** (Flow): people who move onto the streets for the first time in the year (Financial year)

**Continuing Rough Sleepers** (Stock): people who were sleeping rough in the previous year as well as the one in which the analysis is being undertaken

**Returning Rough Sleepers:** (Returners): people who have been seen previously on the streets but not in the preceding year. Definition taken from No One Left Out Communities and Local Government Nov 2008

**In principle, we will deliver the outcome by:**

**Working in three sub-regions across the West Midlands:**

**Worcestershire and Herefordshire**

## **Shropshire and Staffordshire**

### **Birmingham, Black Country, Coventry, Solihull and Warwickshire**

#### **Collectively and individually we will:**

##### **Gather and share intelligence:**

Developing a coherent database across the sub-regions and region and sharing good practice via the West Midlands Homelessness Forum and sub-regional groups

Co-ordinating rough sleeper estimates and counts across the sub-regions and region

##### **Contact:**

We will extend outreach services or options across the sub-regions, ensuring that any rough sleeper in the region can be reached and offered a service

##### **Co-ordinate Cold Weather provision**

Via the sub-regions and other partnerships we will co-ordinate Severe Weather Provision where that adds value to the work being done by individual authorities

##### **Offer individualised solutions:**

ensuring that the right support is given at the right time, without duplication between agencies, through regular information sharing

developing a comprehensive range of services which are available across the sub-regions and available to each local authority area

ensuring that each local authority has, as a minimum, access to the following services for rough sleepers:

- Outreach services
- Reconnection
- Personalised support packages to help people off the street

##### **We will ensure that rough sleepers who refuse to come indoors:**

continue to be offered support and options to come indoors and move away from a rough sleeping lifestyle

understand fully the solution(s) that they have been offered and refused and have the capacity to make the decision to refuse these options

**We will also examine locations which are continuously used as rough sleeping sites to see whether there are factors that require environmental enforcement**, for example, unsafe or illegal disposal of rubbish / food.

**Responsibilities of each local authority:** It is important to recognise that the providers of outreach services (including those offered directly by a Local Authority) cannot solve rough sleeping on their own. To ensure that we are effective each Local Authority will need to be working towards the following:



Creating pathways to accommodation so that outreach providers can respond to reports of rough sleepers, bring people indoors and prevent a second night out.

Creating pathways and making a commitment to support rough sleepers into sustainable accommodation beyond the first night in.

Create clearly identified processes for referring to social services / mental health services in their area.

Offering space / use of meeting rooms for outreach providers to carry out assessments.

Signing up to a data sharing agreement.

Identifying and committing relevant key personnel to attend regular sub-regional NSNO or rough sleepers prevention meetings.

**Funding:** The resources to make this happen will come from existing Homelessness Grant investment and from the DCLG Prevention monies available in each sub-region. It will be up to each authority and sub-region to agree how the money is invested to achieve the outcomes endorsed in this document.

**Exit strategy:** There is no commitment to provide any additional cross authority services for rough sleepers beyond the term of the DCLG Prevention funding. However, the impact of the increased outreach provision and the co-ordination of services will be measured quarterly. Sub-regional project groups will then look at the resource implications of continuing the standard beyond 2013/14 and make recommendations to the relevant authorities in their sub-region.

The following Local Authorities are offering or planning to offer aspects of this standard:

**Worcestershire and Herefordshire**

LA's	Providing one point of contact for reporting rough sleepers	Extend outreach service across the sub-region	Rolling out an agreed sleepers database in each sub-region	Co-ordinating rough sleeper estimates and counts across the sub-regions	Co-ordinating Cold Weather provision	Offer personalised solutions and individual budgets	Facilitate reconnection
Bromsgrove							
Herefordshire							
Malvern Hills							
Redditch							
Worcester							
Wychavon							
Wyre Forest							

## Shropshire and Staffordshire

LA's	Providing one point of contact for reporting rough sleepers	Extend outreach service across the sub-region	Rolling out an agreed sleepers database in each sub-region	Co-ordinating rough sleeper estimates and counts across the sub-regions	Co-ordinating Cold Weather provision	Offer personalised solutions and individual budgets	Facilitate reconnection
Cannock Chase							
East Staffordshire							
Lichfield							
Newcastle under Lyme							
South Staffordshire							
Stafford							
Staffordshire Moorlands							
Stoke on Trent							
Tamworth							

Shropshire							
Telford & Wrekin							

**Birmingham, Black Country, Coventry, Solihull and Warwickshire**

LA's	Providing one point of contact for reporting rough sleepers	Extend outreach service across the sub-region	Rolling out an agreed sleepers database in each sub-region	Co-ordinating rough sleeper estimates and counts across the sub-regions	Co-ordinating Cold Weather provision	Offer personalised solutions and individual budgets	Facilitate reconnection
Birmingham							
Coventry							
Dudley							
North Warwickshire							
Nuneaton & Bedworth							
Rugby							
Sandwell							
Solihull							

Stratford on Avon							
Walsall							
Warwick							
Wolverhampton							

This standard has been endorsed by the following representative of each of the Local Authorities:

In sub-regional chunks

**Worcestershire and Herefordshire**

Signed by:  Print Name:  Date:  On Behalf of Bromsgrove D C	Signed by:  Print Name:  Date:  On Behalf of Worcester C C
Signed by:  Print Name:  Date:  On Behalf of Herefordshire Council	Signed by:  Print Name:  Date:  On Behalf of Wychavon D C
Signed by:  Print Name:  Date:  On Behalf of Malvern Hills D C	Signed by:  Print Name:  Date:  On Behalf of Wyre Forest D C

<p>Signed by:</p> <p>Print Name:</p> <p>Date:</p> <p>On Behalf of Redditch B C</p>	
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**Shropshire and Staffordshire**

<p>Signed by:</p> <p>Print Name:</p> <p>Date:</p> <p>On Behalf of Cannock Chase D C</p>	<p>Signed by:</p> <p>Print Name:</p> <p>Date:</p> <p>On Behalf of Staffordshire Moorlands D C</p>
<p>Signed by:</p> <p>Print Name:</p> <p>Date:</p> <p>On Behalf of East Staffordshire B C</p>	<p>Signed by:</p> <p>Print Name:</p> <p>Date:</p> <p>On Behalf of Stoke on Trent C C</p>
<p>Signed by:</p> <p>Print Name:</p> <p>Date:</p> <p>On Behalf of Lichfield D C</p>	<p>Signed by:</p> <p>Print Name:</p> <p>Date:</p> <p>On Behalf of Tamworth B C</p>

<p>Signed by:</p> <p>Print Name:</p> <p>Date:</p> <p>On Behalf of Newcastle under Lyme B C</p>	<p>Signed by:</p> <p>Print Name:</p> <p>Date:</p> <p>On Behalf of Shropshire Council</p>
<p>Signed by:</p> <p>Print Name:</p> <p>Date:</p> <p>On Behalf of South Staffordshire Council</p>	<p>Signed by:</p> <p>Print Name:</p> <p>Date:</p> <p>On Behalf of Telford &amp; Wrekin Council</p>
<p>Signed by:</p> <p>Print Name:</p> <p>Date:</p> <p>On Behalf of Stafford B C</p>	

**Birmingham, Black Country, Coventry, Solihull and Warwickshire**

<p>Signed by:</p> <p>Print Name:</p> <p>Date:</p> <p>On Behalf of Birmingham C C</p>	<p>Signed by:</p> <p>Print Name:</p> <p>Date:</p> <p>On Behalf of Sandwell Council</p>
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<p>Signed by:</p> <p>Print Name:</p> <p>Date:</p> <p>On Behalf of Coventry C C</p>	<p>Signed by:</p> <p>Print Name:</p> <p>Date:</p> <p>On Behalf of Solihull M B C</p>
<p>Signed by:</p> <p>Print Name:</p> <p>Date:</p> <p>On Behalf of Dudley M B C</p>	<p>Signed by:</p> <p>Print Name:</p> <p>Date:</p> <p>On Behalf of Stratford on Avon D C</p>
<p>Signed by:</p> <p>Print Name:</p> <p>Date:</p> <p>On Behalf of North Warwickshire B C</p>	<p>Signed by:</p> <p>Print Name:</p> <p>Date:</p> <p>On Behalf of Walsall Council</p>
<p>Signed by:</p> <p>Print Name:</p> <p>Date:</p> <p>On Behalf of Nuneaton &amp; Bedworth B C</p>	<p>Signed by:</p> <p>Print Name:</p> <p>Date:</p> <p>On Behalf of Warwick D C</p>
<p>Signed by:</p> <p>Print Name:</p> <p>Date:</p> <p>On Behalf of Rugby B C</p>	<p>Signed by:</p> <p>Print Name:</p> <p>Date:</p> <p>On Behalf of Wolverhampton C C</p>



## Stakeholders and Partners

The following stakeholders and partners have endorsed and will support the implementation of this standard.

Signed by:  Print Name:  Date:  On Behalf of	Signed by:  Print Name:  Date:  On Behalf of
Signed by:  Print Name:  Date:  On Behalf of	Signed by:  Print Name:  Date:  On Behalf of
Signed by:  Print Name:  Date:  On Behalf of	Signed by:  Print Name:  Date:  On Behalf of
Signed by:  Print Name:  Date:  On Behalf of C	Signed by:  Print Name:  Date:  On Behalf of





Strategic Housing Service

Planning for a review of the Homelessness Strategy 2009 -2012

## **Introduction**

The Homelessness Act 2002 requires all local authorities to carry out a review of homelessness and homeless services within their area and keep their strategies under review. Tamworth Borough Councils current Homelessness Strategy expires in 2012 and this planning paper considers the approach that could be taken to fully review the current strategy. Following the completion of the review the Council intends to produce and implement a revised 3-year strategy, to complement the Councils new Healthier Housing Strategy and contribute to the delivery of the priorities contained within this.

## **Approach to the Review Process**

A 4 step approach to the review is suggested:

### **Step 1 – Review of the national, regional and local context**

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- National Context – To determine and incorporate current Coalition Government initiatives such as no second night out and the Localism Bill which states that the authority must when producing its Tenancy Strategy have regard to its current homelessness strategy.
- Regional context – To determine the impact of the dismantling of regional structures on Homelessness
- Local Context – A consideration of the local strategic context to determine how the new strategy could incorporate and deliver against the Councils corporate priorities, Tamworth Borough Councils Healthier Housing Strategy, and additionally, how the Homelessness Strategy can contribute to the work of the task and finish groups developed by the Tamworth Strategic Partnership.

### **Step 2 – Review of the evidence**

There should be a review of the data from a number of sources including:

- Tamworth Borough Councils Housing Needs Study 2012
- P1E data and internal housing data
- Data from other sources such as data from Staffordshire County Council (JCU); Drug and Alcohol Teams; Children's Services; Adults Services;

- External data from: Office for National Statistics (ONS); Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD); Probation Service; RSLs; other agencies providing homelessness services and Health (JSNA)

### **Step 3 – Consultation and engagement**

A wide range of methods should be utilised to engage key stakeholders and partners upon whom the final strategy will have an impact. This could include:

- A Homelessness Strategy Review Event which gives consideration to the priorities contained within the current strategy, their ongoing relevance and determination of new priorities based on evidence
- Utilisation of Tamworth Borough Councils Citizens Panel
- Presentation and discussion at the Private Sector Landlords Forum
- Survey of Key Partners and those engaged in delivering Homelessness activities
- Forum held with young people
- Feedback from Tenant Representatives from the Tenant Consultative Group
- Health Service User Groups

### **Step 4 – Health check of the current Strategy and Action plan to determine gaps**

CLG have produced a Health Check document which could also be used to identify any gaps in both the review to be undertaken and service provision which assists in the assessment of whether the Council has in place all the key strategic and operational aspects required to improve housing outcomes for the residents of Tamworth who access the Housing Advice Service. This includes assessing the following aspects of the service:

- Local Authority and Member Commitment
- Joint Working and Partnerships
- Effective tenancy or floating support
- Health Issues
- Offenders

- Care Leavers
- Mental Health
- Learning Disabilities

This will be undertaken through an internal process but additionally in consultation with the current CLG Homelessness Specialist Advisor.

**Previous Action Plan**

The following is an initial early desktop review of the current Action Plan from the current 2009 – 2012 strategy to give early consideration to those actions that have been completed, those that have been actioned but work is ongoing and there may be some opportunity for further development or improvement and those not actioned that may require review to determine if the action is still relevant.

**The following key applies:**



- Actioned and completed – No further work required



- Actioned – Still work to be undertaken or work ongoing



- Not actioned – May need review to determine if still a current requirement



- For review

**Strategic Priority 1 - Improve and enhance homelessness prevention activities**

ACTION	PROPOSED OUTCOME	LEAD PARTNERSHIP / BODY	RESOURCES	MILESTONE	TARGET DATE	ACTUAL OUTCOME
<p><b>1.1 Implementation and monitor the use of a pilot prevention fund</b></p>	<p>A homelessness prevention fund is an identified sum of money that can be used at the discretion of the HAM to make a small one off payment which will prevent a household from becoming homeless and thereby avoiding the necessity for the authority to fund expensive and inappropriate B&amp;B accommodation</p>	<p><b>HAT HST</b></p>	<p>£10K CLG Homelessness Grant  Staff time</p>	<p>Specification to be agreed by January 2009 and piloted until January 2010  Monitor on a quarterly basis to review impact and results of the scheme by Autumn 2009</p>	<p>January 2009</p>	<p>Spend to Save and Repossession Fund set up and in use</p>
<p><b>1.2 To implement a new homelessness prevention monitoring database to review the first point of contact and the use of the homeless prevention tools</b></p>	<p>To keep an accurate and up to date record of how prevention resources are being used to prevent homelessness.</p>	<p><b>HAM, HAT HST</b></p>	<p>Staff &amp; training time</p>	<p>Specification to be agreed by December 2008  System to go live January 2009  Review &amp; monitor on a quarterly basis</p>	<p>January 2009 &amp; ongoing</p>	<p><b>Homeless Prevention Database set up but no mechanisms for recording first point of contact</b></p>
<p><b>1.3 Work with mortgage lenders/ local solicitors /debt services / local</b></p>	<p>To ensure that there are mechanisms in place where relevant agencies dealing with people</p>	<p><b>HAT HST</b> Local solicitors/ debt advice agencies, LAA,</p>	<p>Staff time</p>	<p>Establish local firms/ partners operating in Tamworth area by February 2009</p>	<p>June 2009 &amp; ongoing</p>	<p><b>Responsive to Lender Notifications and signpost to both TBC or</b></p>

<p><b>court to establish an early warning and monitoring system</b></p>	<p>in financial difficulties refer their clients to the Housing Advice Team at an early stage in order to assess if there are any tools or advice that can prevent homelessness</p>	<p>LSP, HTP</p>		<p>Inform relevant partners of Housing advice service by March 2009</p> <p>Set up referral system/mechanism by April 2009</p>		<p><b>CAB services and links to the Internet for assistance and advice</b></p>
<p><b>1.4 Launch the CAB money advice programme</b></p> <p>Page 388</p>	<p>To enable people in financial difficulties pre and post court to receive money advice in order to prioritise debts in the hope that it will prevent future homelessness. This will also be linked to the governments mortgage rescue scheme initiative</p>	<p><b>HAM, CAB, HST, RSL's, LAA, LSP, HTP</b></p>	<p>£10k CLG direct funding or £10k deducted from CLG grant</p> <p>Staff time</p>	<p>SLA agreed by December 2008</p> <p>Implemented by January 2009</p> <p>Review the programme January 2010</p>	<p>January 2009</p>	<p>Tendered for and awarded to the CAB and retendered for 2014 – 2015 with the option for another years extension dependent on resources</p>
<p><b>1.5 Further develop and monitor the home visits approach to the prevention of homelessness</b></p>	<p>To prevent family collusion where young adults are asked to leave the family home and assess if there are any ways to repair failed relationships between families where appropriate</p>	<p><b>HAM, HAT,</b></p>	<p>Staff time</p>	<p>Record data on home visits via the new Homelessness Prevention database</p> <p>Monitor on a quarterly basis to establish the effect home visits is having on the no. of homeless applications from young adults</p>	<p>April 2009</p>	<p>Offer home visits in all cases for mediation in all circumstances</p> <p>This is an area for review and further action</p>
<p><b>1.6 Mediation</b></p>	<p>To enable</p>	<p><b>HAT, Trainers</b></p>	<p>£3k CLG Grant</p>	<p>All Prevention</p>	<p>February 2009</p>	<p><b>One officer</b></p>



<b>training for all prevention officers within the Housing Advice Team</b>	prevention staff to gain the skills required to assist and resolve family conflicts		Staff time	Officers to complete training by January 2009  Monitor the impact of successful mediation casework in reducing future homelessness presentations by April 2010		<b>trained within the Housing Advice Team</b>
<b>1.7 Further develop appropriate consultation mechanisms for service users</b>	To involve service users to get invaluable consultation feedback to shape future delivery	<b>HST, HAM, HAT</b>	£1K CLG grant  Staff time	Review best practice and previous consultation events by March 2009  Identify consultation areas and target groups May 2009  Develop consultation programme June/July 2009	Sept 2009 & ongoing	Customer Consultation across the whole of the Strategic Housing Service is sporadic and needs review and development
<b>1.8 Develop a homelessness prevention pack for all agencies delivering homeless services</b>	To mainstream the quality of information and advice given to all service users.	<b>HAM, HST, HAT RSL's, Voluntary &amp; Statutory agencies</b>	£1k CLG Grant  Staff time	Gather all materials by April 2009  Produce pack by June 2009	June 2009	<b>Not done – To revisit and determine if a web based resource may be appropriate</b>
<b>1.9 Review and amend the education programme with a particular focus on its</b>	To ensure the scheme is relevant and operating effectively to improve homelessness	<b>HST, HAM, current programme provider, Police, Homestart,</b>	£15k CLG Grant  Staff time	Steering Group established and to meet on a quarterly basis to discuss the programme	September 2009	<b>Fully reviewed, accredited by Staffordshire County Council. Also worked with</b>

<p><b>partnership approach</b></p>	<p>awareness and understanding</p>	<p>connexions, Education</p>		<p>Set up the recording system via the homeless prevention database to monitor feedback of all 16-25 year old approaches who have attended the education programme whilst at school by January 2009</p> <p>Review service delivery and provision by March 2009</p> <p>Enhance partnership approach and involvement and devise a revised 2009/10 programme</p> <p>Monitor and review performance annually - July 2010</p>		<p><b>prisons and looking to how this can be extended and utilised in the future</b></p>
<p><b>1.10 Implement and develop service standards within the Housing Advice Team</b></p>	<p>This is to ensure consistency of services is received by all service users who approach the Housing Advice Team for assistance</p>	<p><b>HST, HAM, HAT</b></p>	<p>£1k CLG grant for printing costs</p> <p>Staff time</p>	<p>Drafts published October 2008</p> <p>Review service standards in March 2009</p> <p>Monitor performance through staff PDR's to ensure that the</p>	<p>June 2010</p>	<p><b>Drafted but to be reviewed and more procedure specific</b></p>

				standards are adhered		
<b>1.11 Review financial resources available for sustainable delivery of the Housing Advice Service</b>	To ensure provision of prevention tools are sustainable in the event of any future cuts in funding where possible	<b>HST, HAM, Senior Management, Members, Finance</b>	All prevention tools and other resources including staff time	Review funding by March 2009  Establish future funding in August 2009  Information set into budget process for September 2009	April 2010	Spend plan reviewed and attached to new Strategy

<b>Strategic Priority 2 - Reduce the use of and time spent in temporary accommodation</b>						
<b>ACTION</b>	<b>PROPOSED OUTCOME</b>	<b>LEAD PARTNERSHIP / BODY</b>	<b>RESOURCES</b>	<b>MILESTONE</b>	<b>TARGET DATE</b>	<b>ACTUAL OUTCOME</b>
<b>2.1 Monitor B&amp;B's and other temporary accommodation units on a quarterly basis to ensure that conditions are satisfactory</b>	To ensure that the conditions of temporary accommodation is of a good standard with sufficient facilities.	<b>PSHT, HAM, HAT HST</b>	Staff time	B&B service standards agreed and published  Draft a monitoring system by February 2009  Review services annually October 2009	October 2009	This is currently undertaken on an ad hoc basis – procedures to be put in place to monitor more effectively
<b>2.2 Refer all homeless applicants placed in temporary accommodation to appropriate services</b>	To help vulnerable homeless service users receive appropriate services to improve the likelihood of tenancy sustainability in the future	<b>HAT, Health, Education, SS, SP providers</b>	Dependant on SP funding	Agree referral approach and delivery with providers by April 2009  Devise referral form/procedure by June/July 2009	September 2009	Not done  Partnerships and agreements In place with organisations such as Brighter Futures

				To establish a monitoring mechanism by June/July 2009		
<b>2.3 Set up a temporary accommodation information pack where all relevant services and essential information is provided to licensees</b>	To make sure that service users placed into temporary accommodation receive the relevant local information to continue their daily routines	<b>HAM, HAT, PSHT, HST</b>	£1k CLG Grant  Staff time	Review existing good practice and services in the area by January 2010  Agree material and format by March 2010	May 2010	<b>To be reviewed and looked at for appropriate to go on website</b>
<b>2.4 Ensure regular contact with service users placed in temporary accommodation</b>	To ensure that the housing advice team keep in regular contact with licensees in temporary accommodation in order to maximise efforts to move accepted duty households into independent living.	<b>HAT, HAM</b>	Staff time	Establish recording mechanism by March 2009	April 2009	Done but not recorded – to be recorded
<b>2.5 Formalise a move on protocol and set delivery timescales for accepted duty applicants to move into independent living</b>	To ensure that move on barriers are identified and tackled in order to assist accepted duty service users in temporary accommodation are moved into independent living as quickly as	<b>HAM, HST, Council's Housing Management, RSL's, Supported Housing providers and Support Workers,</b>	Staff time	Set up a meeting with all partners by September 2009  Draft protocol and mechanisms by November 2009  Agree protocol by January 2010	April 2010	

	possible					
<b>2.6 Implementation of an amended PSL to be used as temporary accommodation for placing accepted duty applicants on an interim basis</b>	To prevent the use of B&B and the cost involved in such placements	<b>PSHT, Private Landlords, HST, HAT</b>	£60K Coalfields funding  Staff time	Develop terms and conditions of scheme by January 2009  Implement the scheme April 2009  Monitor April 2009  Review annually by March 2010	April 2009	Got PSL scheme up and running

**Strategic Priority 3 - Improve joint working to ensure effective partnerships are in place**

<b>ACTION</b>	<b>PROPOSED OUTCOME</b>	<b>LEAD PARTNERSHIP / BODY</b>	<b>RESOURCES</b>	<b>MILESTONE</b>	<b>TARGET DATE</b>	<b>ACTUAL OUTCOME</b>
<b>3.1 Set up SLA's with relevant partners to formally enhance joint working mechanisms</b>	To ensure there is a formal understanding between relevant partners and contractors to establish joint priorities, responsibilities, and guarantees. The purpose of this is to reduce any potential conflict by specifying details the levels of availability, serviceability, performance, or other attributes.	<b>HAM, HAT, All partners and contractors</b>	Staff time	CAB SLA completed by Dec ember 2008  Complete a Nightstop SLA jointly with Lichfield DC by April 2009  Complete SLA for Education Programme by August 2009 prior to the 2009/10 Academic year	April 2010	CAB done  Nightstp project ceased
<b>3.2 Formalise</b>	This action will	<b>HAM, TBC</b>	Staff time	Draft a system by	September 2011	Practical letters

<p><b>an early warning system with the council's housing management and RSL's to identify any potential tenants struggling to sustain tenancies.</b></p>	<p>reduce the number of social housing tenants becoming homeless by identifying potential evictees early on in order for effective case work to be attempted to prevent evictions</p>	<p><b>Housing Management, RSL's</b></p>		<p>April 2009 for a TBC early warning system</p> <p>Implement and monitor a TBC system by September 2009</p> <p>Consult and develop expanding the system to RSL's by September 2010</p> <p>Implement the system with all participating RSL's operating in the area by April 2011</p>		<p>out to tenants – revisit policy</p> <p>Review and revisit policies with RSLs</p>
<p><b>3.3 Set up an information sharing protocol with relevant partners and services</b></p>	<p>This is to ensure information is shared in circumstances where appropriate for the benefit of the service users and to prevent information being repeated</p>	<p><b>HAM, HST, Social Services, Mental Health Services, Probation, Police, etc HAT,</b></p>	<p>Staff time</p>	<p>Establish and consult with relevant partners by January 2010</p> <p>Draft protocol by March 2010</p> <p>Agree and implement the information protocol by September 2010</p>	<p>September 2010</p>	<p>Part of Staffordshire scheme</p>
<p><b>3.4 Develop a monitoring system to establish the use of DHP as a homelessness prevention tool</b></p>	<p>This system is to monitor and improve prevention outcomes through the use of DHP</p>	<p><b>HAM, Housing Benefit Manager, HAT</b></p>	<p>Staff time</p>	<p>Access and review best practice by April 2011</p> <p>Draft monitoring system by July 2011</p>	<p>September 2011</p>	<p>Review and revisit in partnership with Benefits</p>

<b>3.5 Organise further joint training with relevant partner services and neighbouring authorities</b>	To share knowledge across differing agencies and offer value for money	<b>HST, HAM, &amp; appropriate partners,</b>	£5k CLG Grant Staff time	Establish gaps in knowledge and identify training opportunities by July 2009  Arrange sessions/ programme by October 2009	October 2009 & ongoing	
<b>3.6 Develop initiatives that prevent worklessness by improving relationships with the Job Centre and other partners to tackle the root causes of homelessness</b>	To tackle and prevent homelessness by targeting vulnerable client groups to establish better links and awareness.	<b>HST, EDT, HAM, Job centre, Connexions, RSL's, Housing Management</b>	Staff time	Access current activity by August 2009  Develop draft initiatives and mechanism by October 2009	December 2009	
<b>3.7 Investigate ways of joint working with partner agencies including Social Services to prevent the homelessness of 16/17 year olds within the borough</b>	To prevent 16 and 17 year olds becoming homeless and being placed in unsuitable temporary accommodation	<b>HAM, SS, HTP</b>	Staff time	Identify key contacts within Social Services by March 2009  Draft a joint protocol by May 2009  Implement by August 2009	Aug 2009	YP protocol
<b>3.8 Develop better signposting and joint</b>	To improve joint accessibility of services for service users	<b>HAM, Voluntary &amp; Statutory agencies,</b>	Staff time	Identify existing protocols and gaps by March 2009	September 2009 ongoing	

protocols with internal and external partners to monitor first point of contact with the Housing Advice Team		HAT, HST		<p>Get feedback from partners by April 2009</p> <p>Draft joint protocol by June 2009</p> <p>Agree with partners by Aug 2009</p> <p>Implementation by Sept 2009</p>		
<p>3.9 Development of a joint Nightstop scheme with Lichfield District Council for 16-25 year olds</p> <p>969</p>	To prevent the use of B&B as a form of temporary accommodation and provide a short term supported placement for young adults	HAM, HST, Lichfield DC, Supporting People, Midland Heart	£15k CLG grant	<p>Analysis of Lichfield District Council existing Nightstop Jan 2009</p> <p>Establish specifications of the joint scheme by Feb 2009</p> <p>Implement the scheme by April 2009</p>	April 2009	Project not progressed
3.10 Update the Lichfield District Council & Tamworth Borough Council Joint Homelessness Strategy Review 2006-2008	To replace the outdated 2006-08 Joint Homelessness Review	HST, LDC, HAM, Steering Group and other partners	£1k CLG Grant Staff time	<p>Review actions that have been implemented and identify any outstanding gaps by January 2010</p> <p>Consultation event to be arranged by April 2010</p>	December 2010	Not done – went alone
3.11 Develop a joint mystery	This is to ensure that service standards	HAM, HST, HAT, and	Staff time	Establish joint partners and	April 2010	



<b>shopping programme with neighbouring local authorities</b>	are guaranteed for all service users	Neighbouring Authorities		mechanism by January 2010 Implement by April 2010		
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**Strategic Priority 4 - Increase the supply of affordable housing and provide more settled homes**

<b>ACTION</b>	<b>PROPOSED OUTCOME</b>	<b>LEAD PARTNERSHIP / BODY</b>	<b>RESOURCES</b>	<b>MILESTONE</b>	<b>TARGET DATE</b>	<b>ACTUAL OUTCOME</b>
<b>4.1 Update housing data to ensure up to date information on the local housing market, supply, demand and housing need is available</b>	To ensure that there is accurate data available to influence and evidence future provision of new housing	<b>HST, Consultants</b>	Coalfields funding (up to £30K)  Staff time	Identify suitable consultants by Feb 2009  Commission a local Housing Market Assessment (HMA) by April 2009  Final report by June 2009  Update selective key data on a 6 month basis	June 2009	Evidence base for Heathier Housing Strategy drafted in 2011 and SHMA updated during 2012
<b>4.2 Increase the supply of affordable housing via the planning system</b>	To ensure that private sector developments incorporate affordable housing thresholds and requirements	<b>HST, Private developers, Planning Dept, RSL's, HCA</b>	NAHP, RSL finance, Private Sector finance, Staff time	Identify opportunities when appropriate	Ongoing throughout the life of the Homelessness Strategy 2009-12 and as per Housing Strategy 2007-10	
<b>4.3 Increase the supply of new social rented</b>	Work with RSL's to increase the number social of rented units	<b>HST, RSL's, HCA, Planning Dept, SP</b>	NAHP, Council land	Identify opportunities when appropriate	Ongoing throughout the life of the Homelessness	

<b>accommodation</b>	where appropriate to				Strategy 2009-12 and as per Housing Strategy 2007-10	
<b>4.4 Promotion and creation of sustainable home ownership</b>	Identify and promote opportunities for residents to purchase sustainable homes	<b>HST, RSL's, Private Developers, Legal &amp; Planning, Homebuy Zone Agents</b>	NAHP, Private Sector finance, RSL resources,	Identify opportunities when appropriate via new initiative such as homebuy Direct etc	Ongoing throughout the life of the Homelessness strategy 2009-12 and as per Housing Strategy 2007-10	
<b>4.5 Setting up a sub regional CBL scheme to widen housing choice for residents within the Borough</b>	To enable residents in a housing need to access social rented accommodation with more choices by bidding for advertised properties	<b>Housing Management, RSL's</b>	£109 CLG sub regional funding  £10k Council's Revenue Resources  Staff time	Review housing register by February 2009  Cabinet Sept 2009  Staff training & launch Autumn 2009	March 2010	CBL set up and operational
<b>4.6 Work with partners to bring 10 empty properties per year back into use</b>	To increase the availability of good quality privately rented accommodation	<b>PSHT, HST, EHT, Private Landlords</b>	£70k coalfields  £46k (town centre) coalfields  Staff time	Devise protocol between PSHT and Council Tax to identify empty properties within the borough January 2009  Formulate a policy and action plan to bring empty properties back into use by February 2009  Identify non residential properties within the borough that may be suitable for	March 2009	Work to bring empty homes back into use ongoing – also money received from the HCA Empty Homes Programme working with Waterloo Housing

				residential use April 2011 (see specific target set out in the Private Sector Housing Strategy)  Monitor annually		
<b>4.7 Promote the Bond Scheme with local letting agents, private landlords, and at corporate events as a way of encouraging the public to use private rented accommodation</b>	To help vulnerable people within the Borough access privately rented accommodation in circumstances where they would normally be unable to afford privately rent	<b>HAT</b> , private landlords and letting agencies, Supporting People providers and supporting partners	£10k CLG Grant  Staff time	Publicise the Bond scheme by April 2009  Review the scheme to monitor its impact on preventing homelessness annually (September 2009) to get a snap shot of the	September 2009	Done and reviewed currenty
<b>4.8 Better utilisation of Council properties whilst improving conditions of the existing stock</b>	To ensure that the council stock condition is up to Decent Homes Standard by 2010 and properties are utilised effectively	<b>Property Services</b> , Housing Management & HST	Capital programme of £17.7 million up until 2012/13  Staff time	Monitor in line with the Decent Homes guidance  Deliver the capital programme on an annual basis  All properties to be decent by 2010	2010 Ongoing	
<b>4.9 Review and Monitor Nomination Agreements</b>	To ensure that RSL's are providing sufficient allocations to applicants on the housing register. This will also	<b>Housing Management</b> , HST, & RSL's	Staff time	Agree and implement revised nomination agreements by August 2009  Review the nomination statistics	August 2009	Done and ngoing

				quarterly to ensure the correct allocation is being adhered to by all RSL's operating within the borough		
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**Strategic Priority 5 - Improve access to accommodation and services, particularly for vulnerable people and those at risk of becoming homeless**

<b>ACTION</b>	<b>PROPOSED OUTCOME</b>	<b>LEAD PARTNERSHIP / BODY</b>	<b>RESOURCES</b>	<b>MILESTONE</b>	<b>TARGET DATE</b>	<b>ACTUAL OUTCOME</b>
<b>5.1 Consider expanding outreach services to provide advice sessions at partner service organisations to tackle barriers of access</b>	To improve accessibility for hard to reach groups and improve awareness of the service. This expansion will also be linked to the locality working agenda.	<b>HAM, HAT, and partner agencies, IT dept</b>	Staff time £2.5k advertising from CLG grant	Identify 2 new outreach sessions by March 2009  Draft promotion materials by April 2009  Send out materials and update the Tamworth Borough Council website by May 2009	June 2009	Hospital to home and CAB – identify further opportunities
<b>5.2 Monitor equality and diversity of all approaches to establish specific needs of specialist groups including Gypsy &amp; Travellers &amp; BME groups</b>	To enable the Housing Strategy Team to gather evidence on specific needs of diverse groups to be used to satisfy future needs	<b>HST, HAM, HAT, specialist support agencies</b>	Staff time	Implementation of the Homelessness Prevention database due for completion by January 2009  Monitor housing needs of specialist groups identified on a quarterly basis	January 2009 & ongoing	

<p><b>5.3 Further Develop and expand the Multi Agency Joint Homelessness Steering Group to incorporate a group specifically for operational issues</b></p>	<p>To enable joint partners and services to rectify any operational issues effecting service delivery</p>	<p><b>HST, HAM, LDC, HAT Team, RSL's, voluntary and statutory agencies</b></p>	<p>Staff time</p>	<p>Explore the feasibility of establishing a sub steering group to incorporate operational issues Feb 2009</p> <p>Identify suitable timetables for the group(s) to meet by March 2009</p> <p>Set up quarterly group meetings and send invites out by April 2009</p>	<p>June/July 2009</p>	
<p><b>5.4 Raise awareness of the Housing Advice Team among County wide partners and seldom heard, seldom seen groups</b></p>	<p>To enable partners to signpost residents in a housing need to the housing advice team when appropriate</p>	<p><b>HAT, HAM, HST, Voluntary &amp; Statutory Agencies</b></p>	<p>Staff time</p> <p>£2.5k advertising from CLG Grant</p>	<p>Review service materials by March 2009</p> <p>Assess any promotional opportunities and use of new technologies by June 2009</p>	<p>September 2009</p>	
<p><b>5.5 Develop formal referral and protocol systems with relevant specialist voluntary and statutory services within</b></p>	<p>To ensure correct referrals are completed between services to prevent inappropriate referrals and reduce the fire fighting of homeless approaches</p>	<p><b>HAM, HAT, PCT, social services, and other statutory and voluntary agencies</b></p>	<p>Staff time</p>	<p>Draft protocol(s) ready for consultation by August 2009</p> <p>Agree protocol with partners by October 2009</p>	<p>December 2009</p>	

<b>the Borough</b>						
<b>5.6 Review the development of further floating support services for specialist groups</b>	To enable vulnerable clients to sustain tenancies	<b>HST, HAM, HAT, statutory and voluntary agencies</b>	SP revenue	Assess the outcome of the SP Review August 2009  Establish client groups with a tendency to fail in sustaining tenancies by June 2010	Dec 2010 dependant on need identified and resources available	
<b>5.7 Increase the provision of additional supported accommodation for young people</b>	To provide opportunities to young adults with limited or no experience of living independently to get support and life skills in order to live independently in the future	<b>HST, RSL's, &amp; support services</b>	SP revenue & HCA capital	Options appraisal of potential schemes  Preferred option agreed by March 2010  Develop and implement by April 2010	April 2010	Lost some – Elim
<b>5.8 Review and update the Homelessness Directory</b>	To provide service users with sufficient information on services available to homeless or potentially homeless clients	<b>HST, HAM, Contractor, neighbouring authorities and statutory and voluntary agencies</b>	(Approximately £4k for design & printing dependant on no. of partners involved)- CLG grant	Establish partners and scope for the project by Sept 2009  Appoint appropriate contractor November 2009  Publish directory by March 2010	March 2010	Replace with web based resources
<b>5.9 Review of current provision of accommodation and support services of all</b>	To identify any need for additional accommodation and support of vulnerable client groups to prevent the	<b>HST, HAM, RSL's, SP, Supported accommodation providers, Support</b>	Staff time	Access outcome of the SP review Aug 2009  Begin review by December 2009	August 2010	

vulnerable client groups	homelessness of these specialist groups	agencies, & other voluntary and Statutory agencies		Complete assessment by August 2010		
5.10 Carry out EIA's on all relevant aspects of the service.	To ensure diverse groups are not being discriminated against wherever possible by carrying out EIA's for all policies and procedures are EIA and new documents	HAM, HAT, HST	Staff time	Homelessness Strategy Review 2009-12 EIA completed December 2008  Policies/procedures assessed by December 2009  Amendments and revised policies/procedures complete by March 2010	March 2010 & ongoing	

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**Next Steps**

To agree an approach to reviewing and revising the Homelessness Strategy based upon this discussion paper  
 To identify the key milestones of the project and agree a timetable for delivery

