



Tamworth Listens Report

October 2011

Introduction

Tamworth Listens is a regular consultation process that feeds into the State of Tamworth Debate.

The idea behind Tamworth Listens is to involve the public in a debate about Tamworth borough and to make the councillors and partners more visible and accountable.

Methodology

Two events were held on the 22nd September 2011. Residents were invited to come along and 'speed date' representatives. Each resident was given 15 minutes to ask questions to Councillors, Officers, the Police and the Fire Service.

Questions were given in advance but residents were able to ask additional questions at the events. A facilitator was at each table to record what was being discussed.

In addition to the events, comment cards were available so residents could send their views on what they thought made a 'place' good to live, what they think needed to be improved to make Tamworth a better place to live and any other general comment.

19 residents attended the events and 152 comment cards were returned.

Key findings

- It is evident that people want to know what the Council is doing and want to be more informed. From various consultations it appears that council services need to be better promoted.

Reduce level of crime

- There is a perceived threat of anti-social behaviour in relation to large numbers of young people gathering. Residents felt that having more sport and leisure opportunities would help deal with this issue.
- Inconsiderate and/or illegal parking was seen as a problem in Tamworth, especially within town centre residential areas.
- We need to do more to tackle residents' fear of crime and anti-social behaviour.

Improve job prospects

- Respondents view available employment in Tamworth as low wage and low skill.
- Respondents feel that Tamworth Borough Council should do all it can to encourage a range of employment opportunities.

Improve cleanliness

- Litter and dog fouling is seen as a big problem. Many feel that resources are concentrated in the town centre and want them to be evenly spread across the borough.
- Respondents feel that more organised community litter pick days will help to make residents take more responsibility for their local environment and change attitudes to dropping litter.

Improve affordable decent housing

- People feel that a range of affordable housing needs to be provided which meets people's needs

Improve shopping facilities

- Developing the town centre is important to residents. Respondents wanted a higher quality of shops, bars and restaurants.
- There is a lot of support for linking the town centre and Ventura Park.

What makes somewhere a good place to live?

Respondents were asked to select from a list four things that they thought made somewhere a good place to live.

Counts Analysis % Respondents	
Base	149 100.0%
Please tell us the FOUR things from the list below that y...	
Low levels of crime	129 86.6%
Good health services	69 46.3%
Clean streets	64 43.0%
Good education provision	71 47.7%
Affordable decent housing	75 50.3%
Good parks and open spaces	57 38.3%
Good sports and leisure facilities	18 12.1%
Good job prospects	99 66.4%
Community events	10 6.7%

The four key areas selected that make somewhere a good place to live were:

1. Low levels of crime
2. Good job prospects
3. Affordable decent housing
4. Good education provision

Twice the amount of men than women indicated that good sports and leisure facilities made somewhere a good place to live. Good education provision tended to be more important to women than men.

What would make Tamworth a better place to live?

Respondents were then asked to select five things that they felt needed to improve most to make Tamworth a better place to live.

Counts Analysis % Respondents	
Base	151 100.0%
Please tick FIVE things you feel need to improve most to ...	
Level of crime	132 87.4%
Health service	66 43.7%
Cleanliness of streets	88 58.3%
Education provision	55 36.4%
Shopping facilities	69 45.7%
Affordable decent housing	83 55.0%
Parks and open spaces	49 32.5%
Community events	33 21.9%
Sports and leisure facilities	27 17.9%
Job prospects	127 84.1%

The five key areas selected that would make Tamworth a better place to live were:

1. Reduce level of crime
2. Improve job prospects
3. Improve cleanliness of streets
4. Improve affordable decent housing
5. Improve shopping facilities

More women than men selected that job prospects needed to improve to make Tamworth a better place to live. Improved sports and leisure facilities and improved parks and open spaces tended to be more important to men.

Reduce level of crime

When asked the question “have you ever been directly affected by crime or anti-social behaviour?” very few focus group attendees have been. Concerns are mainly due to large numbers of young people hanging around or the nature of the night time economy in Tamworth. Attendees were reluctant to come into the town centre at night because they were afraid of what would happen. This raises the question about what we are going to do tackle residents’ fear of crime and anti-social behaviour.

There is a feeling that the Police and Tamworth Borough Council do not work together to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour.

“Making the town safer must be a priority. Many of us are afraid to go out in the evening and certainly wouldn’t go into Tamworth town centre due to the anti social behaviour”

“The low-level crime needs to be tackled as a priority”

41 respondents out of the 132 who indicated that levels of crime and anti-social behaviour needed to improve disagreed that the Police and other local public services are successfully dealing with anti-social behaviour and crime in their local area.

More than 60% indicated that anti-social behaviour was not a big problem or not a problem at all and they felt fairly safe or very safe when out in their local area after dark.

Tackling crime and anti-social behaviour is an area where residents feel the council could do more preventative work. They believe that promoting the sports and leisure opportunities we provide or providing additional accessible sport and leisure opportunities for young people will help to tackle youth crime and anti-social behaviour.

“Give teens more leisure facilities, youth clubs etc, they get in trouble less”

“Put funds into prevention”

“We need to stop relying on enforcement, it doesn't work. You need to teach people”

Respondents were asked to consider a number of different crimes and anti-social behaviour, and identify if any were a problem for them in their local area.

Analysis % Respondents	Total					
		A very big problem	A fairly big problem	Not a big problem	Not a problem at all	No opinion
Base	587	7.0%	15.8%	42.9%	29.5%	4.8%
Noisy neighbours or loud parties	148	4.1%	12.2%	45.9%	37.2%	0.7%
Vandalism, graffiti or other deliberate damage to property or vehicles	146	6.2%	18.5%	50.0%	23.3%	2.1%
People using or dealing drugs	146	8.9%	15.8%	34.9%	28.1%	12.3%
People being drunk or rowdy in public places	147	8.8%	17.0%	40.8%	29.3%	4.1%

Noisy neighbours or loud parties were seen as the smallest problem with 16% of respondents indicating that this was a very big problem or a fairly big problem in their area.

Respondents were more likely to have no opinion on people using or dealing drugs in their local area which may be because this is a less obvious crime.

People being drunk or rowdy in public places is rated as the biggest problem, followed by people using or dealing drugs and vandalism, graffiti or other deliberate damage to property or vehicles.

Respondents comment that vandalism and graffiti also contribute to people's perceptions of an area being dangerous and them feeling unsafe. There are also concerns that if an area looks uncared for it is more likely to be vandalised.

"dirt breeds dirt. If graffiti isn't cleaned up it's almost like saying 'it's ok to graffiti here'. It's the same with litter. If a place is already littered people are more likely to drop their rubbish"

It is the perception of some respondents that Street Wardens only patrol in the town centre and they would like to see increased patrols in other parts of the Borough. They also feel that more wardens are needed in the evening when anti-social behaviour is most prevalent.

Improve job prospects

84% of respondents felt that improved job prospects would make Tamworth a better place to live. *Work with businesses to create more employment locally* was ranked as highest priority under *aspire and prosper in Tamworth*.

Please tell us how important our priorities under 'aspire and prosper in Tamworth' are to you. 1 being very important and 5 being very unimportant.

Analysis % Respondents	Total					
		1	2	3	4	5
Base	725	46.2%	25.2%	13.1%	8.0%	7.4%
Raise aspiration and attainment levels of young people.	145	44.8%	22.1%	17.2%	11.7%	4.1%
Create opportunities for business growth	144	52.1%	27.8%	10.4%	2.8%	6.9%
Work with businesses to create more employment locally	146	61.0%	21.2%	7.5%	6.8%	3.4%
Brand and market "Tamworth" as a great place to "live life to the full.	145	34.5%	25.5%	15.9%	11.7%	12.4%
Create the technology and physical infrastructure necessary	145	38.6%	29.7%	14.5%	6.9%	10.3%

Respondents feel that Tamworth typically offers low wage employment and as a result of this graduates have to move away to find suitable employment. They also feel opportunities to develop a skilled trade have vanished, putting school leavers at a disadvantage when looking for work.

Although respondents recognise that employment is an issue nationally, they feel Tamworth Borough Council should do all it can to encourage businesses to locate in Tamworth and therefore develop a range of employment opportunities for its residents.

"it would be good to see more employment for school leavers who have lower academic qualifications, more apprenticeships would be good"

"Job prospects in Tamworth are very limited"

Respondents also think there needs to be opportunities for out of work adults to retrain in a different employment area.

Improve cleanliness of streets

Litter, dog fouling and general street cleanliness is an issue that is raised time and time again. Many express the view that street cleaning is an area where the council do not perform well and think that Tamworth is extremely unclean, especially when compared to other nearby towns.

"The streets are untidy, both through litter and unkempt grassed areas, even after cutting by sub contractors"

"I understand that everything is a balancing act but more could be done on litter-picking as parts of the town are starting to look untidy.

Near to me the area between the canal and Durlston

Close/Brancaster Close has a lot of litter particularly by the canal bridge. If the litter can't be picked can you at least provide more bins for people to put the litter into?"

"Disgraceful litter – why plant flowers when the streets aren't clean"

"Litter is a major issue"

"Litter seems to be getting worse (or I'm just noticing it more!)

Problem I guess is some people not bothered about making a mess, having no pride in the town, feeling no ownership of their town/locality, unconscious bad habits"

Although respondents accept that residents themselves have a responsibility to not drop litter, there is a belief that the Council should do more to improve the appearance of the local environment. There are areas in the borough where street sweeping is difficult due to parked cars and residents in these areas think something needs to be done to address this issue.

When it comes to the service as a whole, respondents tend to express the view that the service is not joined up and do not understand, for example, why, if someone is emptying the litter bins the area is not litter picked at the same time by the same person. This tends to give respondents a poor view of the service irrelevant of whether the service is actually performing well in that area.

An issue with the levels of litter was a concern that came out of the 2010 Tamworth Listens along with dissatisfaction with the maintenance of the environment in certain areas of the borough.

Respondents were asked to what extent they agreed or disagreed that their local area, Tamworth town centre and Tamworth borough were kept clean and free from litter.

Analysis % Respondents	Total					
		Fully agree	Agree	Disagree	Fully disagree	No opinion
Base	431	8.4%	46.6%	37.4%	6.0%	1.6%
Your local area	143	7.0%	49.0%	34.3%	7.7%	2.1%
Tam worth town centre	143	9.8%	48.3%	35.7%	4.9%	1.4%
Tam worth overall	145	8.3%	42.8%	42.1%	5.5%	1.4%

42% of respondents disagreed that their local area was kept clean and free from litter. This was slightly less for the town centre with 40.6% expressing the view that it unclean and littered. Nearly half of respondents disagreed that the borough of Tamworth was kept clean and free from litter.

One of the concerns about the town centre is the chewing gum on the ground and respondents feel this makes the town centre look dirty even if there's no litter about. It was also suggested that some of the shop windows contribute to the town centre looking 'scruffy' and more should be done to make shops keep the interior and exterior of the building neat and tidy and empty shop windows should be dressed so they do not look run down.

"More effort needed to ensure business premises responsibility to ensure they keep their buildings and environments clean"

Respondents feel that the council could do more to change people's behaviour of dropping litter. It was suggested that the town centre should have recycling bins as well as rubbish bins to encourage residents to recycle their waste.

Respondents also feel that more organised community litter pick days will help to make residents take more responsibility for their local environment and change attitudes to dropping litter.

There is also a problem with the reporting of fly-tipping, litter and general environmental maintenance. When asked if they have reported, for example, an incident of fly-tipping many

respondents will answer; no. There is an assumption that either someone else has reported it or someone from the council will see it and collect it. They then continue to notice the unreported fly-tipping and their perception is that the council is performing poorly. More needs to be done with residents to encourage them to report issues they have.

However, there were a few complaints about issues being reported but not then being actioned.

Improve affordable decent housing

More than half of respondents expressed the view that affordable decent housing needed to improve to make Tamworth a better place to live.

People feel that a range of affordable housing needs to be provided which meets people's needs.

"Check out empty houses and possibly build more bungalow housing so that larger flats and houses could be used for deserving larger families who have lived in Tamworth for years"

"A whole generation is locked out of the housing market and with growing unemployment the young generation need more council housing"

"More rented housing for young, single people in the centre of town. Families get priority for council housing and young single people don't have a chance"

"More properties for the young Tamworthians so they have somewhere to live so that they could be proud of their own homes instead of living with parent"

Respondents want to see more quality in affordable housing and feel the council should do more to ensure that residents are living in decent homes that provide adequate space.

"Site at Amington Fields been earmarked for affordable housing for 15 years but nothing has been done. Need to get more affordable housing in Tamworth"

"Lots of empty flats and houses in Tamworth which should be used for affordable housing"

"Less housing projects creating rabbit hutches for people to live in, better quality houses"

Improve shopping facilities

Respondents express the view that on the whole shopping in Tamworth is good. However, dissatisfaction is expressed at the quality of shops, bars and restaurants in the town centre and many feel that the council is actively encouraging businesses to site on Ventura Park, leaving the town centre to decline.

"Tamworth town centre is in danger of 'closing' the range of shops is poor; the condition of shops is poor. We seem obsessed with Ventura Park"

The view that the council is 'killing off' the town centre is not helped by the parking charges which many see as unreasonably high and state that this is the reason they will not come into the town centre.

"Quite often I would like to visit town centre and Ventura on the same day but refuse to pay exorbitant parking charges in town when I can park free in Ventura."

Respondents feel that drastic change needs to take place in the town centre and they express the view that Ventura Park has become the new town centre. There is much support for linking Ventura Park and the town centre whether this be by improving the walkways by creating a safer, clearer and more direct route or by providing direct public transport between the two areas.

"It should be simple to walk there and back; due to the lack of pedestrian crossings ...you take your life in your hands trying to cross the road. There are plenty of people who would walk if it wasn't so dangerous!"

"It would be great for the town centre to have more visitors from out of Tamworth shuttled over to our very lovely town centre but we do need better retail businesses by bringing down business rates And getting landlords on board to do more reasonable rents. So we could attract more different and diverse retailers. I.e. independent fashion boutiques, ASK restaurant chain, wine bar, galleries and art shops"

Many respondents presume that the council owns most of the shops in the town centre and therefore has more control over the businesses that set up in them.

Concerns were also raised about the traffic congestion at Ventura Park and this often means they will shop elsewhere.

Improve health services

43.7% of respondents felt that health services needed to be improved to make Tamworth a better place to live.

The main issue that is raised is Tamworth does not have a hospital and respondents feel that Burton and Sutton Coldfield are too far to travel for both patients and visitors.

"The Peel Hospital needs to provide A&E facilities. Good Hope is too far away"

"Health service is an issue because of distance needed to travel to nearest hospital"

"We have been in need of a 'proper' all facilities hospital. Good as Sir Robert Peel is, the population here need a fully operational hospital with most facilities"

Respondents also support a preventative approach to health services and feel the council should support more projects that promote healthy living.

"More programmes aimed at helping people to lose weight. Need to do something to tackle obesity. Fast food chains, McDonalds etc should be made to do something to counteract obesity"

Improve education provision

Almost half of respondents (47.7) felt that good education provision made somewhere a good place to live. 36.4% felt that education provision needed to improve to make Tamworth a better place to live.

The perception of respondents is that Tamworth offers low education standards and they feel that this may put off families that wish to move here. There is also a concern that this will make families move out of Tamworth to areas where the education standard is perceived to be higher.

"We, as a family are concerned over school league tables and whether to move to Lichfield before our children get to secondary school"

Improve parks and open spaces

Many respondents use the parks and open spaces in Tamworth and overall 76.8% were satisfied with the facilities available to them.

Respondents express the view that the castle grounds is very good but that outside of this area, standards are more variable and it is these areas that require greater focus.

Table showing satisfaction with local parks (LP) and the town centre park (TC)										
	Very satisfied		Satisfied		Dissatisfied		Very dissatisfied		No Opinion	
	LP	TC	LP	TC	LP	TC	LP	TC	LP	TC
Range of equipment	9.3%	20.8%	38%	51%	14.7%	5.4%	3.3%	0%	34.7%	22.8%
Maintenance of equipment	7.4%	15.4%	37.6%	54.4%	18.1%	6.7%	1.3%	0%	35.6%	23.5%
Distance from your home	15.5%	-	48%	-	6.1%	-	1.4%	-	29.1%	-
Cleanliness	5.4%	12.1%	42.3%	54.4%	16.1%	16.1%	7.4%	1.3%	28.9%	16.1%
Facilities	6%	14.7%	37.6%	54%	18.8%	12%	3.4%	1.3%	34.2%	18%

Respondents express most dissatisfaction with the cleanliness and facilities at the town centre park and their local park.

Table showing satisfaction with local open space (LA) and the town centre open spaces (TC)										
	Very satisfied		Satisfied		Dissatisfied		Very dissatisfied		No Opinion	
	LA	TC	LA	TC	LA	TC	LA	TC	LA	TC
Maintenance	8.1%	13.6%	55%	68.7%	18.1%	8.2%	3.4%	2%	15.4%	7.5%
Cleanliness	4.1%	10.2%	45%	50.3%	27.2%	29.3%	8.8%	2.7%	14.3%	7.5%
Distance from your home	21.6%	-	57.4%	-	2.7%	-	1.4%	-	16.9%	-

Respondents express most dissatisfaction with the cleanliness of their local open space.

Community events

Community events were ranked as the lowest area that makes somewhere a good place to live. However, respondents see the benefits of bringing visitors into Tamworth and creating a sense of community pride.

Respondents feel that the standard and quality of outdoor events run by Tamworth Borough Council are excellent.

Generally, those who do not feel there is enough variety in events want more events for families, children and older people, a better variety of music events and a food festival. Respondents would also like to see the castle grounds used more for events.

Sports and leisure

17.9% of respondents indicated that improved sports and leisure opportunities would make Tamworth a better place to live.

Many who attended the budget consultation focus groups were unsure what sports and leisure opportunities the council offered to residents and did not tend to use them. They expressed the view that the council needed to promote the sport and leisure opportunities better.

There was praise for the work that has been done at the Castle with the Staffordshire Hoard and many would like to see a permanent exhibition.

Many have expressed the view that Tamworth's leisure offer could be improved by utilising the rivers, providing boat trips.

Blog comments

“Generally the council do a very good job and I am really happy to live in Tamworth. I understand that everything is a balancing act but more could be done on litter-picking as parts of the town are starting to look untidy. Near to me the area between the canal and Durlston Close/Brancaster Close has a lot of litter particularly by the canal bridge. If the litter can't be picked can you at least provide more bins for people to put the litter into?”

“Benches at the skate park. The skate park could really do with some benches as when it is busy it would make a big difference to its users. As a regular skate park I often get annoyed at people resting or just chilling out on the ramps. They are often in the way and putting them self at risk when other users are using the ramps they are sitting on. A few benches here and there would hopefully stop people sitting on the ramps and would make the skate park safer and better to use for every one that uses it. Thanks for reading.”

“I think TBC does an excellent job generally, I chose Tamworth as a place to live 8 years ago and have never regretted moving here, there is so much to do and the council has done their best to keep services going. I do think that some bus services have been reduced by too much, and if you need a connection with the 110, there is often a long wait, as this service no longer goes down Lichfield road, I have a 25 minute wait for the number 3 at 6.20pm, which after a hospital visit, is the last thing I need.

“Contrary to the views of the other 2 posters I have lived in Tamworth for 31 years and have seen it slowly going to hell in a hand-basket.

- The streets are untidy both through litter and unkempt grassed areas, even after cutting by sub contractors;
- My local park is regularly used as a car park with accompanying damage to the grass by a private rugby club, despite specific bye-laws to the contrary;
- The town centre dying slowly while Tamworth Borough Council encourages big companies onto Ventura Park;
- Car parking charges that encourage drivers to park in local suburban areas causing traffic chaos or to go to Ventura Park where parking is free;
- The sell-off of Peaks to private industry instead of maintaining and investing in the future of people and the town;
- An attempt by the council to hand over ownership of the housing stock to private housing associations;

These are just a few of the things that have made Tamworth a less appealing place to live- and perhaps more importantly to visit”

"The biggy for me is antisocial behaviour but littering fly tipping, poop scooping and graffiti come under that banner as well. Education from nursery school upwards is vital to try to minimise these unwanted behaviours but we need to do it in a fun engaging way when they are young but clamp down hard on older age groups. There are nowhere near enough litter bins in the town and certainly not enough dog waste bins. People don't like carrying it around trying to find a bin so either dump the bag in the nearest bush or don't pick it up at all. One of my biggest pet hates that really annoys me is people who eat in car parks such as Asda and EVEN McDonalds itself and plonk their rubbish on the floor by the car sometimes even when there's a bin right by them. If there's CCTV on these car parks they should be prosecuted to teach them a lesson. Its pure idleness they just expect someone from the shop to come and clear up behind them"

"I think they should help more with insulating homes that cannot get cavity wall such as myself, I have done all I can but still need more. I work 16 hrs a week so only get a small wage, but due to working I cant get any grants etc, I live in a pre fabricated house, which I know was only to temporarily house people during the war an should have been knocked down by now? I'm paying an astonishingly high rent and council tax and should be helped more? I have approached our mp about this thinking that something else could be done but to no avail? My gas bill alone this year thru the winter was about 450 pounds which I struggled paying off? This day and age is hard enough money wise for lots of people, so this should be just one simple thing that should be looked at to help save money all round? There are lots of ways to insulate a house but it costs money, money I don't have, and considering I'm paying to live in a council property then my stupidly high council tax bill should surely cover this too? Please let me know if anyone agrees?"

"The council have a tough job to sort out a lot of the issues, since selling off prize assets like the Peaks and the Municipal Golf Course there's little in the way of control of these things. It wasn't so long ago that Tamworth had a highly capable council, sad to see the state it's in now. The Ankerside is looking very tired and it could do with some exterior TLC. I'm sure this isn't a direct council responsibility but presumably the owners have a responsibility to the upkeep of the facade. The council should really spend some time, money and effort in trying to regenerate the town centre. Ventura park, which is an utterly miserable place to spend any time at all, has free car parking so it's highly likely that people will visit it, from both in and out of town, and go home again without going near the town centre. If the town centre is to survive it must attract some of these folk and make it a desirable place to visit. Please don't spend our money on town planning consultants, you'd be better off hiring a decent PR agency and selling the virtues of the town to visitors and businesses. (By the way, whoever you've got right now doesn't fit the description)

The visitors centre in the Phil Dix building is actually really good. You'd never know it was there. That's just a shocking waste of our money. Use decent marketeers."

"I agree entirely with Chris's email, and in part with a lot of the others. I have lived in Tamworth since March 1972, originally coming in on the overspill. We have seen a pretty market town turn into a grim desert. Correct marketing is essential, and it is not being proficiently done at the moment. The town centre is a dismal place to visit, with little in the way of decent shops. It's very 'bitty' all told. We need shops where we can purchase ordinary day to day things and also clothes, not just charity shops (which serve a good purpose but we have too many) and mobile phone shops. Tamworth should try to attract quality, and at the moment it does not. Ventura park is Ok for those who like to shop (I don't), but there is insufficient parking – on a Saturday if you are not there by 9.30, forget it! Also insufficient exits make shopping there unbearable at busy times. Just try and get out of the Homebase car park at busy times – an hour of one's day wasted. Obviously, I try to shop when it is not busy, but one has to consider those who work. Fingers out, Tamworth, and get cracking. Clear rubbish from walkways (the walkway through Lothersdale parallel to Pennine Way is a shocking sight), get marketing and make our little town a pleasure to come to"

"Q: Why doesn't the council tell us how to save their/our money, and push us much more into doing it, especially how to avoid unnecessary council work and expense (e.g. litter picking)?

Is the answer:

- a) It does – even though I'm not aware of it?
- b) It doesn't want to because that might mean doing some Council Workers out of a job (an understandable fear)?
- c) It just hasn't given this enough attention?"

Butter Market comments

Tamworth residents and businesses were invited to put questions to the Leader and Deputy Leader of Tamworth Borough Council and the Cabinet member for Quality of Life during an event held in the Butter Market.

Visitors to the event also got the chance to make their voices heard by writing their suggestions on a graffiti wall. Suggestions to improve the borough included holding a film evening in the Castle Grounds and for Tamworth Borough Council to offer more help to businesses wanting to expand.

- Open the town hall more often for people to see.
- Too many food outlets
- More ashtrays to avoid fines
- Free carry round 'doubters' for fags.
- More litter bins on streets.
- Regular, on time bus services that's cheaper. People can't get to work or job interviews on time!
- Recycle bins throughout the town centre
- You don't make enough of our assets!
- Allow fly posting if it is controlled.
- Don't be so protective on allowing things to happen. And don't run everything. Example, the poster boards are paid for by the council tax payer and should not be used exclusively for Tamworth Borough Council.
- Bring Tamworth Information Centre back to town – no one knows where it is – older people won't walk that far.
- Tamworth town centre support group/think tank. Tamworth town centre traders start to think about how they can work with the council/county council and other bodies to see what ideas we can come up with to improve the town centre.
- I guess free parking will come up. Well that's not working unless we all want to pay more council tax – debate
- We can't keep moaning and leaving everything to the council
- A free transport link between Ventura Park and the town centre
- Extend the canal into Tamworth and catch the passing tourism – 3 locks Tamworth.
- Encourage specialist retailers here – Atherstone, for instance, looked at becoming a book town – Tamworth can do it. By the way, Guy made his fortune selling books.
- We talk an awful lot about Tamworth's heritage so give the town centre its heritage centre. We don't need a huge building; just a town centre location. Just look, you even use it on your PR stuff. We have a great town full of history.
- (boats and boaters). More use of the rivers. Let brum have two rivers and see what they would do!!
- More dog bins.
- Signage on the canals 'visit Tamworth town centre. It's full of life/history/culture etc etc'.

- More restaurants
 - Tidy the place up!!
 - What's happening about Aldergate centre? Town centre needs shops i.e. Primark/M&S
 - Free parking after 3pm to encourage more people between 3-5pm.
 - Indoor skatepark!!
 - Less wildlife being destroyed for homes.
 - More fayres – like all the time.
-
- More shops with loads of stuff
 - Places to fit teenage culture and style
 - You don't seem to care
 - How much does council spend on tenants leaving properties – what about having a bond paid before they take the property?
 - Need more bands, more arcades
 - Free cinema in castle grounds at night
 - There is rubbish along the rivers. We could do with a few more dog bins
 - Try building trust – it works if you do it right
 - Keep footpaths for people, not parked cars
 - People do stupid things because they have too much time. Stuff in Tamworth is too expensive.
 - More places to go in spare time
 - Young people doing voluntary work
 - Make it a bit more modern.
 - On Wednesdays set up start up market, encourage youngsters to try selling stuff and almost act like a dragons den type thing. Ask town retailers to help develop their skills in business.
 - The castle and town hall – open it up to promoters to take up downtime. People like to go to events in top class venues. For example, B.B.B.V are playing Skipton Castle in September, it's been sold out for over 12 months. Right now I would use the Castle as a venue but the pricing structure is the same as weddings. This is no good because the promoters can't make a profit. If people come to quality events they might decide that Tamworth is a place worth visiting, time and again. Lichfield industrial estate needs revamping and bringing up to date to attract new businesses.
 - Prom and classical music event in Lady Meadow where the cherry fair originally was.
 - Get rid of some of the card shops.
 - Cheaper buses
 - Town centre is all moving to Ventura Park leaving all the horrible cheap shops in town centre! Not enough of a mixture.
 - Positive graffiti
 - A place where you can fish without a licence
 - Remove louts
 - Bring Primark into the town and bring New Look back.
 - Bring H&M in town
 - Empty shops should have incentives
 - Town looks scruffy. Empty shop windows should be dressed.

- More money into the music scene
- Tidy up street obstructions and comply with planning concepts
- Stop discrimination!
- More help for businesses to expand.

Comment cards

- Give teens more leisure facilities, youth clubs etc, they get in trouble less. How about an American idea, summer camp, 6 weeks away, rock climbing, canoeing, some never ever seen a cow!!
- There needs to be a lot less 'red tape' and interactions between the Council and the public need to be streamlined.
- More jobs will mean less crime, they go together.
- A need to create better training for older unemployed people to learn alternative experience.
- Ordinary folk should be able to live peacefully and comfortably in the town free from crime and anti-social behaviour, all forms of pollution and waste.
- Making the town safer must be a priority. Many of us are afraid to go out in the evening and certainly wouldn't go into Tamworth town centre due to the anti social behaviour
- Public health and local employment as priorities. Encouraging re-generation of town centre also.
- Get kids off the streets, give them more opportunity. Create a nicer town centre. Take the traffic from Ventura. For adults in the evening
- Make the shops selling alcohol more observant. Children stopping adults outside of shops to buy them cigarettes and alcohol should be fined heavily when caught. That will stop a lot of it.
- If we have the infrastructure to facilitate growth then we will grow. No infrastructure will mean when people or business wants to grow they will look elsewhere
- trouble is nothing gets done about anything
- Provide something for youngsters to do. Visit local schools etc about healthy eating, drug abuse etc.
- Make Tamworth the best it could be
- I have lived in Tamworth all my life and have seen some changes that have been wrong.
- Vision should be about lower business rates, cheaper rents to create jobs. Then government - to be attacked by local councils on not tackling greed from oil and utility companies, so people have money in their pockets.
- I would like to have a clean and safe place to live with activities available for all ages
- On the whole it seems like a good idea to improve the opportunities of the people living in Tamworth but there is always an element of society that wants no change so convincing them will be the hardest job. Not all change is a good thing either
- If crime was dealt with satisfactorily then we should all feel safer

- It is important to provide improved services for the forgotten generation. We owe them so much (war, paid into our services) but in return they are treated worse than criminals in prison.
- Youth crime and unsocial behaviour must be stomped out. Also underage drinking
- not sure how you will raise attainment and aspiration in young people
- Tamworth is only about one and a half hours from London by train, this needs to be promoted.
- The cycle paths around Tamworth are an excellent way to encourage people to cycle to improve health and reduce car use. Keep maintaining them please
- Get down to the basics
- The One Tamworth, Perfectly placed vision or concept is only as good as the backing it gets so it needs advertising and projection to the public and businesses i.e circulars, news paper ads and perhaps banners in market places and adds on buses
- In a perfect world it would be full employment for everyone. As this is not possible it would be good to see more employment for school leavers who have lower academic qualifications, more apprenticeships would be good.
- Bring more discipline into everyday life
- Litter in and around Tamworth is exceptionally bad. In order to improve our chances of drawing more people to Tamworth both socially and for business we need to clean up, very poor our streets, parks are for litter.
- Start at the roots - more efforts needed from them to understand their children's needs. How about teaching classes for cooking decent meals instead of relying on expensive, unhealthy takeaway
- The low-level crime needs to be tackled as a priority.
- Get the problem youth off our streets.
- Move Tamworth's Tourist information office back into the main shopping area making it accessible to all rather than only those capable of walking so far from the main shopping area.
- The use of pay back to the community from offenders on improving the open spaces has improved the area
- Regeneration is essential to growth and prosperity
- Spend more on doing council homes up like replacing windows, doors, bathrooms and kitchens
- All of the above are very important to people living in Tamworth
- With changing policy of central government TBC will have an uphill struggle, The Big Community!!!
- My impression is that our streets seem to have improved over the last 12-18 months. There seems to be less litter about. I don't suppose we have suddenly become tidy so, well done!
- more outdoor events to encourage healthier lifestyle, community awareness of what's around, make them use facilities more,
- My husband and I have never received grants as we are not on benefits. Worked and saved for retirements therefore we loose out. Too much money given to grants. People should pay a proportion.

- This year's outdoor events have once again been outstanding and we have also have appreciated the opportunity to see the Staffordshire Hoard
- Access to all customer services
- More spent in Dosthill as it all seems to be given to Glascote and Amington area with better services and more visible police and council people in other areas than in Dosthill.
- There should be wheelchair access to communal buildings
- Check out empty houses and possibly build more bungalow housing so that larger flats and houses could be used for deserving larger families who have lived in Tamworth for years
- As recycling collections have been stopped in the high rise flats more refuse collections will be needed as everything will have to be put down the chute
- I think some of the things money is spent on is not down to the money but not using it properly
- Council have lost the plot!
- A whole generation is locked out of the housing market and with growing unemployment the young generation need more council housing. Higher points for children and single mothers encourages unwanted pregnancies
- More path cleaning and areas around shops. Stricter rules on litter. Better education on litter
- Spend more wisely on housing
- The street cleaning leaves much to be desired. The culprits of course are dirty people who will drop litter on the pavement next to a litter bin. However, these people will always be with us unless better educated. This does not mean the council abdicates their responsibilities to ensure clean streets. More effort needed to ensure business premises responsibility to ensure they keep their buildings and environments clean.
- Personally I find that the high volume of low-level crime and general minor infringements to be most frustrating.
- remove the people who make living in there own homes a nightmare.
- The Peel Hospital needs to provide A&E facilities. Good Hope is to far away. Attract more businesses, especially Logistics Companies to utilise the amount of empty warehousing in the area. Reduce in town parking fees to attract shoppers back into the town and attract a better selection of shops. Utilise what we have to the full extent ,i.e the 2 rivers by making them an attraction as they have in Stratford.
- Regeneration of the Town Centre
- Litter seems to be getting worse (or I'm just noticing it more!) Problem I guess is some people not bothered about making a mess, having no pride in the town, feeling no ownership of their town / locality, unconscious bad habits.
- Improve the Town Centre shopping facilities. Increase the efficiency of the Council and cut out waste.
- Unfortunately the councils of the 60s and 70s turned Tamworth into a hole. Look at Lichfield and other places which have retained their history in buildings etc. Anti social behaviour must

be improved and the town centre must be radically changed to bring people back in

- More dog waste bins and more severe fines for those found not using them.
- Tamworth town centre has few local shops run by local business - most of the shops (if open) are about betting, shoes, travel. These will not encourage visitors to return. A visit to the town centre has left me feeling stressed and that it was a waste of time again.
- More street cleaning and dog owners who let their dogs foul streets fined
- Better cross city links
- Clean graffiti off bridges ie 66A. Reduce traffic through Amington village. Stop proposed reduction in local bus service to Amington.
- The approaches into the town centre, especially Bolebridge Street, need to be cleaned up. There are filthy pavements and shop fronts. This is not helped by a long line of taxis; however, the flower displays are excellent.
- More control to ban garden fires
- More local employment opportunities. Local hospital able to offer more than the basic health care as at present.
- Shopping - Ventura Park excellent but possibly at the expense of the town centre. Town centre needs to be looked at i.e. improve parking and access. Reduce car parking charges.
- Nicer pubs and restaurants. Cleaner streets and open spaces. Better swimming facilities. More events for adults.
- Keep the kids from playing football on shop car parks near to houses. Also keep an eye on council tenants who leave their dust bins outside the back of their houses that are the main bus route every week. Sometimes they are left there for a whole week until the day for another pick up and they pull last weeks in and push out the bin for that day only for that to be there for another week.
- Transport services and information about services. Have you ever tried to get a bus to an industrial estate.
- a better range of shops, a link to Ventura, cheaper parking to encourage town centre shopping
- We need more houses, a few more public toilets, and better variety of shops.
- To ensure regular checks on open fields at Ladybridge. I am disgusted every time I walk over there. Youths urinating, young girls pilling over there and couples having sex.
- We, as a family are concerned over school league tables and whether to move to Lichfield before our children get to secondary school.
- Clean Tamworth streets of dog mess and litter. Reintroduce dog waste bags. Use offenders to clear streets.
- Community and neighbourhood cohesion is needed in all parts of Tamworth.
- More properties for the young Tamworthians so they have somewhere to live so that they could be proud of their own homes instead of living with parents.

- A low crime level is important to everybody. Clean streets are important to local people and visitors. Good shops bring people into the town centre and keep locals from spending elsewhere
- Dog fouling everywhere (disgusting)
- Proper police services (not going to Burton). Less mobile phone shops with a local feel rather than big store names (good mix). Cheaper and better community events. Properly advertised and cheaper to locals.
- Good police activity and keep an eye on our older residents to stop bullying by teenagers and parents and grandparents who live nearby and play ballgames with the ball smashing into our fences and gardens missing by inches
- Affordable sports and leisure facilities including low cost parking!
- More police presence on the streets
- Less housing projects creating rabbit hutches for people to live in, better quality houses. Better local hospital facilities. Parks and open spaces. Affordable life styles. Clean environment. Jobs for all.
- Stamp out underage drinking at night, and if reported, Police must attend immediately to stamp it out
- Health service is an issue because of distance needed to travel to nearest hospital Litter is a problem in many places in the UK. The big fast food providers should pay a levy to cover the costs, and there needs to be a nationwide campaign to stop people throwing litter out of their cars and vans: there is a great deal of commercial waste that finds its way onto the streets. Better job prospects would solve most issues
- To cut out the drug abuse and alcohol abuse that leads to crime
- The parks and open spaces in the castle grounds are excellent, however, apart from these any other open space near to where I live is either a school playing field, a football pitch, a grass verge near a road or a grassed island with some tired looking rose bushes on it; grim, boring, nothing to look at. Open spaces, sport and leisure facilities need to be improved to give teenager somewhere to go and where other age groups can sit or walk their dogs.
- The Library facility needs updating. I feel that the book selection is poor and looks shabby. The computer access is restricted
- Tamworth town centre needs more shops rather than all the big shops being at Ventura. Not everyone has a car so the bus service to some out-lying villages needs improving
- Encourage businesses within the town centre
- More litter bins provided. There is too much rubbish lying around the streets which spoils an excellent flower display.
- We have been in need of a 'proper' all facilities hospital. Good as Sir Robert Peel is, the population here need a fully operational hospital with most facilities.
- Keep paths and areas away from roads cleaner
- Traffic on Ventura is as bad as ever. More entry/exit places urgently needed
- Side street gutters (town centre) choked up. Never swept. Pavement in Victoria Rd needs relaying - a court case in waiting

- Litter is a major issue
- More job opportunities
- Proper hospital - crown magistrates and county courts - improve parks and river areas totally underutilised. Town centre - demolish middle entry and create proper square with shops, bars and restaurants. Improve roads and signage. If Tamworth has no access to extra land build properties higher. University.
- Education, education, education
- Make vandals accountable for their actions. Offenders who are identified should clean up their handiwork.
- Cleanliness and tidiness not just in the town centre. On all estates.
- We could do with some good shops in the town centre. If we do not get better shops the town will become a ghost town
- Reducing costs should come out of bankers pay, not everyone elses!!
- I do not agree with increasing any of the above. Reports have shown that Tamworth is the fattest town so increasing leisure facilities would not be a great idea. Traders should feel encouraged to have shops within Ankerside and also High Street stores.
- Prioritise health and employment
- Personally I think some council tenants abuse the housing system
- As TBC will be taking over full responsibility of the rents they will need to be very careful where they cut as the general public are being crushed from all sides. Destroying the good will of their tenants.
- Use cheaper sports like golf, cricket, rounders etc.
- Cut councillors expenses by 50% stop the mayor's banquets it's only a Jolly for other mayors and councillor.
- The more people there are the more revenue should be available to invest into services but the more use it gets the more money it takes to keep the service the same level so gradual decay is going to happen unless more money is found.
- Communities should be encouraged to deal with anti-social behaviour at a minor level themselves. They may need help to start the process going. Things for young people to do may help with the issue.
- Maintenance of parks and open spaces could be done by voluntary sector, or residents or people on community services or even low risk prisoners
- Politicians and some council staff pay should be reduced e.g. C.E.O £102,000 PA
- More help for the elderly
- Less fact finding trips abroad!!
- Britain in Bloom
- Tackle the abuse of the benefit system.
- Get rid of the Talkback magazine and the team. How much is that costing us?
- Fine the litter louts more or give them community service to clean up the mess they make (including dropping cigarette butts)

- Encouraging us the public to save unnecessary council expense, to make more money available for where it's needed.
- I am sure we could reduce the number of Councillors per ward and the Borough Councillors should take the places of the County Councillors. By reducing the number of Councillors it should follow that the number of Council Officers supporting the Councillors could be reduced.
- Reduce the number of councillors per ward
- reducing utility bills and increasing recycling in offices and council owned buildings
- All councillors should declare their attendance levels and only be paid the minimum wage band declare their expenses publically.
- don't give people money to leave council houses clean, they should anyway out of respect, instead charge them for the clean up
- Ensuring that those claiming benefits are really entitled to the privilege
- Get rid of management who are not performing. Cutting council expenses.
- Increase charges for local restaurants as they must be producing high waste as there are too many Chinese, Indian, and food outlets. Look at proper tendering process for council jobs.
- Tamworth should have a Museum. I suggest where the Snow dome is. That way the view to and from our great castle would be much improved. Move the Snowdome somewhere where it's not so out of place. Take a look at Lichfield they have built houses that are in keeping with the surroundings. Not a big tin factory shed. Maybe get rid of whoever agreed the plans.
- Insist on zero tolerance & give maximum sentences for unsocial behaviour, criminal damage, drunkenness, littering, general crime & drug abuse, it might dissuade one or two of them from re-offending & save the town money
- Stop wasting money on big canopy that hasn't been used for anything, would have been better invested in getting new businesses into the town to justify the rent and rate charged for this location
- Start putting money into the town not Ventura before there isn't a town
- LADYBRIDGE ;-maybe widen the pavements a little and put flower tubs on there too.
- CONSIDER/PERHAPS put a noiceboard up depicting the HISTORY of the bridge;- making it more of an attraction LEADING to the Castle itself.
- Perhaps make a pictorial signage of the bird life and other wildlife that also use the bridge, there are many species. Frogs, toads, grass snakes, blue tits, and coal tits, thrush, blackbird, wren, hedge sparrow, yellow hammer, even a woodpecker, also in the actual meadow behind the bridge we recently photographed a lapwing. There are also Gulls, and terns, herons, and a kingfisher; - in the banking. It's a small but effective and thriving 'man made' nature reserve.

- Try to make people put the unsightly bins inside their own gardens. Since new people have moved into this area, (within the last year), bins have begun to be left outside homes, and are a mess to see, especially in warmer weather. Flies and smells don't help give a good impression.
- To assist in the recycling projects, allow a free use to a 'car boot' (officially organised) sale on the car park beside the Air cadets' centre/st Johns centre, on a Sunday maybe? (Moor St./Richmond close).
- People will sell or swap items and save on items being binned? This has been a great success where my sister lives. Rubbish has reduced in landfill by 16% or more.
- Give scrap metal dealers an OFFICIAL day for each area;- then people can put out unwanted electrical and metal goods on a set day, and the "scrap dealers" won't be so annoying to people. Items will be collected and better use made of them? (less fly tipping?)
- In 'info biz' allow a small section for people who have moved house, to offer items for 'swaps';- items which don't fit in the new home they have gone to, but are too good/expensive to bin. (Curtains and blinds etc).
- It will encourage people to read it more, and bin it less? If it's read more, advertisers will use it more?
- Stop cars parking on the dropped kerbs and the grass verges, outside disabled person's homes. It damages the grass and it spoils the area. (It's also inconsiderate, dangerous, and inconvenient to have to walk right round in the SIDE OF THE ROAD, approx one lamp post distance, just to get back to the other side of the 'bad drivers' car)
- Maybe put a white line in front of the dropped kerb.
- (and a no dog fouling sign?) The one over the road is too high up and is ignored.