

Tamworth Borough Council
Neighbourhood Services

Annual Report 2018-2019



**TENANT
APPROVED!**

Tamworth
Borough Council

1 Welcome to your Annual Report

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Welcome to the 2018-2019 Annual Report for Tenants and Leaseholders. This report is designed to show how we are performing and what we have achieved over the last 12 months.

We would like to acknowledge the valuable contribution made by tenants to all of our work and encourage you not to just read this report, but take part in improving services in the future.

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

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



Who we are



Area	Total
Amington	364
Belgrave	295
Bolehall	349
Borough Road	41
Coton Green	65
Dosthill	80
Fazeley	112
Gillway	220
Glascoate	580
Hockley	150
Kettlebrook	210
Leyfields	449
Stonydelph	712
The Leys	66
Town Centre	390
Two Gates	20
Wilnecote	108

Total number of properties: 4,211

Number of tenancies as at 31 March 2019

Total: 4,211



BEDSIT



**FLAT/
MAISONETTE**

1 bed = 666
2 bed = 517
3 bed = 20



HOUSE

2 bed = 491
3 bed = 1765
4 bed+ = 150



BUNGALOW

1 bed = 203
2 bed = 32



SHELTERED

1 bed = 324
2 bed = 38
3 bed = 3

2 A year in pictures



Bright Crescent Plant a Pot



Bright Crescent Plant a Pot



Magnolia Plant a Pot



Magnolia Plant a Pot



The Building Brighter Futures project



Seniors United visit Wates



Tenant Inspector
- Estate Inspection

3 Tenant involvement and empowerment

There are various ways for tenants to get involved

MORE THAN 80 INVOLVEMENT ACTIVITIES

HAVE BEEN ARRANGED, RANGING FROM POSTAL SURVEYS, ESTATE-BASED ACTIVITIES & CONSULTATION EVENTS

ANALYSED MORE THAN 817



SURVEYS FROM CUSTOMERS

10 ACTIVE TENANT INSPECTORS



1 TENANT CO-ORDINATOR

71

TENANT-LED COMMUNAL CLEANING AUDITS CARRIED OUT ACROSS THE BOROUGH

INCREASE IN TENANTS REGISTERED ON THE DATABASE OF INVOLVEMENT

10 ANNUAL PROGRAMME OF ESTATE INSPECTIONS COMPLETED



ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

Plant a Pot events

IT Workshops

Visit to Wates, (repairs contractor)

Police Community Engagement Day

Inspector Opportunities for 2019/2020

Tenant Insoector Communal Cleaning Audits	Estate Inspection Programme	Tenant Consultative Group	Complaints Review Panel
Tenant inspectors monitor the quality of service delivery against defined standards and undertake on-site inspections.	To help ensure estates are kept clean and in good condition, regular inspections are carried out by landlord services and tenants.	This group discusses a range of issues and is involved in the decision making process to improve housing services for all. This group is consulted on all tenant related policies, practices and procedures and current issues affecting Tamworth Borough Council and its tenants.	The Panel reviews anonymised information relating to the Tell Us Policy. The Panel looks for key trends and emerging common themes and will make recommendations for service improvements.

ASB Service Improvement Group	Tenants Voice Editorial Panel	Tenant Involvement Group	Surveys/ Questionnaires/ Focus Groups/ Consultation sessions
<p>This is a forum that looks at the delivery of service improvements, considers and discusses best practice, self assesses Landlord Services' ASB service for compliance and establishes and monitors action plans and key performance data.</p>	<p>A working group who review publications produced by Landlord Services. These include Open House, Annual Report to tenants, information leaflets, surveys, standard letters and any document intended for tenants.</p> <p>Any document showing the 'Tenant Approved' stamp has been reviewed by the Editorial Panel to ensure the content and design meet their high standards, is clear, helpful and in plain language.</p>	<p>Oversees the implementation of actions and performance targets set out in the Tenant Involvement Strategy action plan. In addition to this, the group closely monitors all customer intelligence and performance.</p>	<p>This provides customers with an opportunity to give their views and opinions on the services they receive.</p>
Seniors United	Neighbourhood Improvement Programme	Police Community Engagement Days	Estate Based Events
<p>This is a forum for sheltered housing tenants to get together, share ideas and experiences and discuss issues relevant to their needs with the support of their Scheme Manager and Tenant Regulatory & Involvement Team.</p>	<p>This initiative gives tenants the opportunity to make recommendations to improve the environment in their local area, subject to budget availability.</p>	<p>Engagement days address local area issues through community contact, address parking issues and abandoned properties and give residents the opportunity to get involved and have their say in local issues that affect or are of interest to them.</p>	<p>Various events may be held throughout the year for tenants to come along and find out about changes or improvements to services, such as rent levels, repairs or any other housing or environmental issue. These events are normally publicised in Open House, Marmion House and on the Council's website.</p>

3 Tenant involvement and empowerment

Moving Forward 2019/2020

- Continue to promote the work of the involvement working groups and to increase the number of tenant representatives on all involvement working groups to ensure representation from across all areas of the borough
- The Tenant Consultative Group will continue to be fully involved in the future repairs service options from March 2020
- The Tenant Consultative Group will consider environmental works for the following financial year as part of wider neighbourhood improvements
- Monthly monitoring of Neighbourhoods service performance, intelligence and satisfaction
- Continue with the annual programme of estate inspections to assess the standards of service
- Encourage more tenant involvement in the future of Neighbourhoods publications
- Continue with the annual 'Plant a Pot' programme aimed to enable elderly residents with mobility issues to actively take part in a fun and inclusive gardening event
- Work closely with tenant inspectors to carry out a scheduled programme of communal cleaning audits against the Neighbourhood Offer
- Continue to support and assist in planned engagement days and estate based events to target and resolve estate based issues
- Launch a new tenants newsletter and involvement literature to encourage more involvement

Customer feedback

Complaints, Compliments and Service Requests

We value all feedback about services we deliver to tenants and we understand that at times we do not always get things right. We want to hear from you if you do not feel that you have received the level of service you expect from us. This will enable us to learn and make improvements to our services.

A total of **565** complaints, compliments and service requests were received within Landlord Services during 2018/2019. Of the total received, **35%** were classified as complaints, **55%** service requests and **10%** compliments

It should be noted that whilst there has been a decrease in complaints for the period 2018-2019, we observe the significant increase in the number of service requests.



	2016/2017	2017/2018	2018/2019
COMPLAINTS	216	206	195
COMPLIMENTS	53	50	55
SERVICE REQUESTS	223	261	315
TOTAL	492	517	565

	2016/2017	2017/2018	2018/2019
Number of stage 1 complaints	195	183	179
Number of stage 2 complaints	16	16	16
Number of stage 3 complaints *	5	7	/
Number of complaints upheld	30	37	23
Number of compliments	53	50	55

* A review of Tell Us was undertaken in 2018 and the stage 3 escalation was removed from the process

Across the total number of **195 complaints**:

- **51%** relate to **Wates** (inclusive of Wates Gas)
- **9%** relate to **Housing Solutions**
- **14%** relate to **Tenancy/ASB** issues
- **8%** relate to **TBC Repairs**
- **6%** relate to **Property Services**
- **12%** relate to **other landlord services**

Across the total number of **55 compliments**:

- **15%** relate to **Wates** (inc Gas)
- **15%** relate to **Property Services**
- **13%** to **Caretaking/Cleaning**
- **22%** to **Tenancy/ASB** issues
- **35%** relate to **other landlord services**

3 Tenant involvement and empowerment

In summary, **195** complaints were received within Landlord Services during 2018/2019. This is a significantly small proportion in relation to **5665** household and garage tenancies.

Complaints upheld

During 2018/2019 there were a total of **23** complaints, that following investigation, were classified as upheld. Of the 23 cases **70%** were associated with Wates, repairs contractor.

Learning from your complaints

- Improved communication between Wates and their subcontractors
- ID badges are now produced each time an operative attends a property

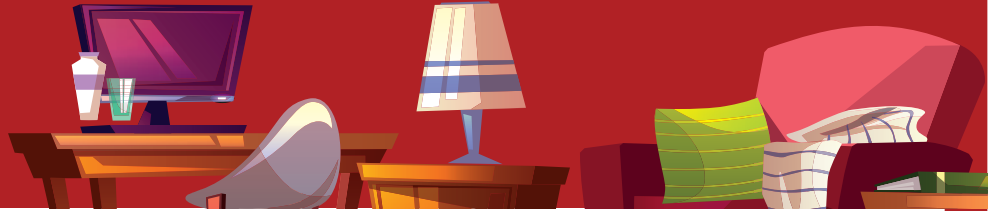
HAVE YOUR SAY!

Tamworth Borough Council wants to ensure that the services we provide meet both our published standards and the needs of our customers. All customer feedback is important to us and can be a complaint, suggestion, comment or compliment.

All feedback, including complaints, is taken seriously and we use this to learn lessons as to how things may have been done differently and to improve future services. Where possible, we will publish information on how we have made improvements resulting from your feedback.

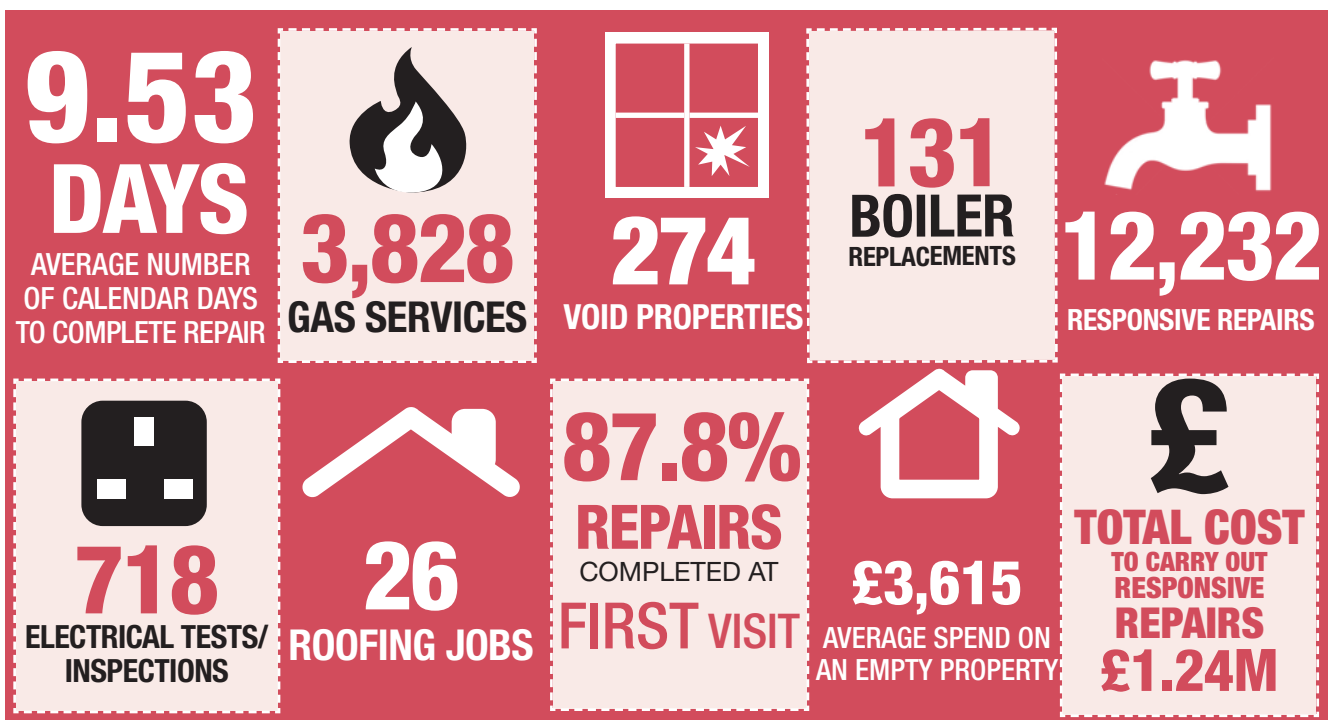
Have your say either by going online at www.tamworth.gov.uk/do-it-online or telephone 01827 709709.

4 Home



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

	2017/2018	2018/2019
The percentage of repairs completed on first visit	89.34%	87.8%
Customer satisfaction for responsive repairs	95%	91%
The percentage of repairs completed on first visit	89.34%	87.8%
The percentage of appointments made and kept	90.48%	91.3%
Percentage of complaints relating to the repairs service	45%	49%
Percentage of complaints relating to the gas service	1%	2%



Gas Servicing

TENANT SATISFACTION WITH GAS SERVICING ARRANGEMENTS



4 Home

Planned maintenance

In 2018/2019 we spent approximately **£3,212,000** on planned home improvements.

IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME	HOW MANY	TOTAL SPEND
Kitchens	206	£942,494
Bathrooms	186	£986,953
Roofing	26	£405,811
Windows and Doors	161	£250,755
Disabled Adaptations (Major and Minor)	70	£408,810
Heating Installs	139	£216,511

Disabled adaptations

This year we carried out 70 disabled adaptations to tenants' homes, making them more suitable for the householder.

High Rise Project

All works associated with the renewal of the balcony screens and stairwell windows have been successfully completed and the feedback has been extremely positive. The decoration of all blocks, which includes painting of the walls and the provision of a new floor covering, is complete.

‘All very satisfied and pleased with the works carried out. It looks and feels brighter in the stairwells.’

Resident from Townshend House

‘Looks very nice and better than the old balconies. Makes the blocks look much more modern and the works were done without any interruption.’

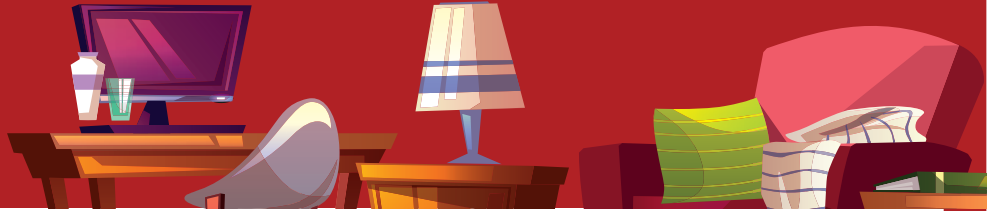
Resident from Peel House

‘The balconies are brilliant and don't feel as closed in as they did before. The stairwells are a lot brighter and the sprinkler system is very tidy.’

Resident from Strode House

‘Very pleased with the sprinkler installation. The contractors were very helpful and courteous and cleaned up after themselves. The Resident Liaison Officer was very good and contacted us a number of times before the work started.’

Resident from Strode House



The final lift in the current phase of the renewal programme will be in Weymouth House with works commencing early October and completion due in February 2020. The resident communication process for this is well underway and will continue throughout as it has with the other blocks during the lift refurbishment programme.

4 Home

Sprinkler Project

The sprinkler project is progressing well and remains on target for completion by the end of the year 2019/2020. Residents took up the opportunity, earlier in the year to visit a mock flat and found this extremely beneficial to meet the contractor Lovell and discuss any issues. We are pleased to report there were few issues as the works have progressed. Once the works are complete it is likely that there will be some wider publicity in conjunction with Staffordshire Fire & Rescue, who remain actively involved in the project.

New Repairs Contractors

The current contractual arrangements with Wates come to a natural conclusion in March 2020 and as such the Council is currently in the process procuring two new contracts, again using the NHF Schedule of Rates. One contract will predominantly be delivering responsive repairs, the other will deliver predominantly planned and larger works. Procurement is due to be concluded in November 2019 with contracts due to be awarded in December 2019 so that mobilisation can commence in January 2020. These contracts will be in place for 10 years and include significant Social Value elements along with opportunities to improve on customer service.

Alongside these new contracts the Council will be bringing repairs 'Call Handling' back in house, as well as receiving and diagnosing incoming repairs calls the new call handling service will be undertaking a greater degree of customer care follow-up contact and will be used to drive improvements in the service provided to customers.

Looking Forward 2019/2020

- We will continue to carry out fire risk assessments, asbestos surveys and legionella risk assessments on our properties so as to ensure the ongoing and continued safety of tenants in their homes
- We carried out 131 boiler replacements and will continue the programme until all of our properties have energy efficient ones fitted.
- During the 19/20 financial year we will be working with residents to deliver a series of estate improvement projects. By December 2019 all 6 high-rise blocks in the Tamworth should have fire sprinklers installed

5 Tenancy



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

Number of active housing applicants on the housing waiting list, by band, as at 31 March 2017 was 1535

Band 1+	2	
Band 1	86	 
Band 2	321	      
Band 3	216	    
Band 4	910	                 

DID YOU KNOW?

- Customers are given an optional welfare benefit check at the start of their tenancy which also includes referrals to support agencies
- **15** days on average to let properties
- **274** council properties became available for reletting; approximately 23 per month, 52 of these were refused
- **95%** of customers satisfied with the Finding a Home service
- Housing Solutions offer interviews to all applicants to ensure that customers are aware of all housing choices available to them
- Early intervention prevented **141** households becoming homeless, an increase from 103
- The average length of stay in Bed and Breakfast is 32 nights - this was a reduction of **36** and below the 42 night limit set by legislation
- There were 17 households in temporary accommodation 1 in Bed and Breakfast, 10 private sector leasing and 6 in temporary council accommodation
- We delivered the incentive to move programme, which is designed to release larger family accommodation

5 Tenancy

Sheltered Housing Service Peer Review

In June 2018, Tamworth Borough Council invited Mr Chris Jones, EROSH's regional lead for the Midlands to act as peer reviewer of Tamworth Borough Council's sheltered housing service for older residents. Mr Jones was selected on the basis of his expertise on older person's housing and support services;

- EROSH is the national consortium for older people's housing and support services
- EROSH is an essential membership organisation for professionals in the sector
- EROSH provides practical expert advice and guidance, news and commentary for front line staff and service managers to help respond to the challenges and opportunities currently facing the sector
- The aim is to enhance individual and organisational performance, to increase compliance with national standards and ultimately to maintain or improve the quality of housing related support services for older people

With the current challenges and opportunities facing the sheltered housing sector, it was timely for the Council to invite an independent review of its sheltered housing services for several reasons;

- 1) To be certain the service is performing well and continuing to deliver quality sheltered housing in Tamworth in the absence of any regulatory inspection/framework for sheltered housing services
- 2) It is good practice and reassuring for residents to have the service independently reality checked
- 3) Reputationally it is good for the Council and successfully continues to promote sheltered housing services in Tamworth
- 4) It prepares the service well for moving forward in responding the government's plans for future funding sheltered housing
- 5) It demonstrates the Council's responsiveness to continuous improvement and developing for future sheltered housing provision

The reviewer used a variety of methods to assess performance:

Meeting with senior management staff including Portfolio Holder for Housing	File checks	Meeting and shadowing sheltered management and scheme managers Meeting with safeguarding team
Site visits to numerous sheltered schemes	Performance Indicators	Desk top analyses
Talking to stakeholders	Focus groups with residents	Satisfaction surveys, compliments and complaints



The review was undertaken over a period of a working week in June 2018 and focused on the following objectives;

<p>QUALITY ASSURANCE - with a focus on service, performance and outcomes</p>	<p>REASSURANCE - in relation to operational practice around safeguarding and the supporting of vulnerable residents</p>	<p>BENCH MARKING AND BEST PRACTICE - to aid learning from other providers</p>
<p>NEEDS ASSESSMENT AND ENHANCED HOUSING MANAGEMENT SUPPORT PLANNING - tenants have tenancy management plans based on an up-to-date assessment of need</p>	<p>HEALTH & SAFETY - to ensure the security, health and safety of tenants, staff, visitors are protected including good safety management of the buildings</p>	<p>VALUE FOR MONEY - affordability, are tenants receiving good value for money, price of service</p>
<p>EMPOWERMENT AND SATISFACTION - consulting and involving tenants, customer satisfaction and complaints</p>	<p>ORGANISATION AND MANAGEMENT - leadership and accountability and management systems</p>	<p>CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT AND PREPARATION FOR CHANGE AND FUTURE PROVISION</p>

In September 2018, the Peer Review Report was published. The report was extremely complimentary to the current sheltered service at Tamworth Borough Council drawing particular attention to the overall management and running of the sheltered schemes, residents satisfaction and a series of comprehensive and robust policies, procedures and risk assessments to train, guide and protect both residents and staff. A detailed Action Plan was also produced with those recommendations highlighted for improving the current service.

5 Tenancy

Capital Works Programme

New carpets fitted throughout the corridors of Ankermoor Sheltered Scheme as phase one of the programme. Phase two has also commenced with the painting of ceilings and doors. Other works are also planned across other schemes as part of the wider programme.



- **100%** of monitoring sheets completed in relation to Legionella
- **100%** of scheme resident meetings held bi-monthly
- On average **97.95%** (13,867) of alarm calls answered within 60 seconds
- **100%** needs assessments carried out at all sheltered schemes for potential applicants
- Annual fire safety inspection completed
- Customer satisfaction **90%**

Mobilisation to Eldercare Lifeline Services

Successful switch over from Wealden & Eastbourne Lifeline Services (Wel) to Eldercare Lifeline Services for the provision of:

- 24 hour lifeline services for all of the Council's Sheltered Housing schemes
- 24 hour lifeline services for all of our 12 high rise lifts alarms – also covering high rise basement/storage area smoke detectors
- Lone working monitoring for some Council staff



Health and Safety

We continue to work with Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service to ensure that the sheltered schemes maintain their high standards of health and safety and fire safety, with particular emphasis on the safe storage and charging of mobility scooters.

We continue to develop the range of current activities to enable tenants to stay well and independent. The following activities provided across the schemes:

- Cottage Healing centre treatment
- Hairdressers
- Chiropodists
- Opticians
- Dementia Friends
- Assistive technology market stall for useful gadgets
- Eat well programme
- Olive branch visits from the local fire service

Sheltered Scheme Plant a Pot events

Successful 'Plant a Pot' events take place annually at a couple of Tamworth Borough Council's sheltered schemes as part of a rolling programme. The event was an idea initially suggested by Tamworth's Seniors United Group.

The aim of the event is to enable elderly residents to actively take part in a fun and inclusive gardening event thereby increasing mobility and tackling issues of social isolation. Any gardening activity is considered beneficial for residents as it is an enjoyable form of exercise, encourages the use of all motor skills, can improve endurance and strength, promotes relaxation and improves wellbeing as a result of social interaction.



*Bright Crescent Plant a Pot
(more pictures on page 3)*

Supported Housing

- **100%** (12) of lettings turned around within 10 days from tenancy end date
- **100%** of applicants involved in a needs and risk assessment prior to moving in
- **100%** of support plans agreed within 4 weeks
- **100%** (5) of successful move-ons

6 Rent

Introduction of Universal Credit

Universal Credit is a new benefit to support you if you are working and on a low income or you are out of work. It is a single payment paid monthly in arrears to those of working age and replaces Housing Benefit, Child Tax Credit, Income Support, Working Tax Credit, Income Based Job Seekers Allowance and Income Related Employment Support Allowance. In Tamworth, most working age applicants who have a break in their existing benefits will now have to start claiming Universal Credit.

If you receive Universal Credit you won't receive Housing Benefit but part of your Universal Credit payment includes help towards your rent. Therefore, council tenants on Universal Credit will now have to pay all their rent to the council themselves. There are certain circumstances which you can apply for your Universal Credit housing costs to be paid direct to the council. Help towards your Council Tax, known as Council Tax Reduction, is NOT included in Universal Credit so you need to make a separate application directly to the council if you believe you are eligible.

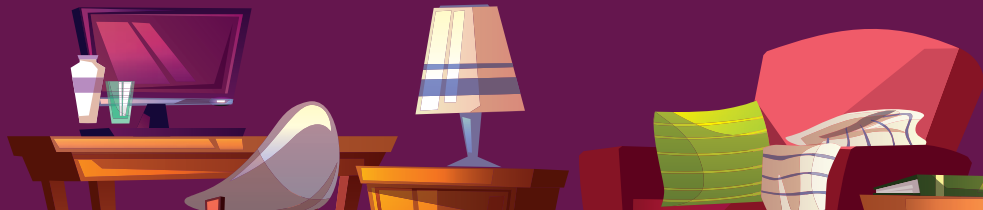
To find more about Universal Credit Advance Payments and Budgeting Advance Payments, visit www.gov.uk/universal-credit or Telephone 0800 328 5644 - Textphone 0800 328 1344

Universal Credit

	AS AT 31 MARCH 2019
Number of Council tenants on Universal Credit	645
Number of Council tenants on Universal Credit in Rent Arrears	443
Percentage of Council tenants on Universal Credit in Rent Arrears	68.68%
Number of Council tenants on Universal Credit not in Rent Arrears	202
Percentage of Council tenants on Universal Credit not in Rent Arrears	31.32%

As part of the council's response to welfare reform, in particular Universal Credit, a corporate project group has been re-set to collaborate, understand and take actions to mitigate the impact. The corporate project group includes staff and partners from across the organisation. There remains organisational commitment to:

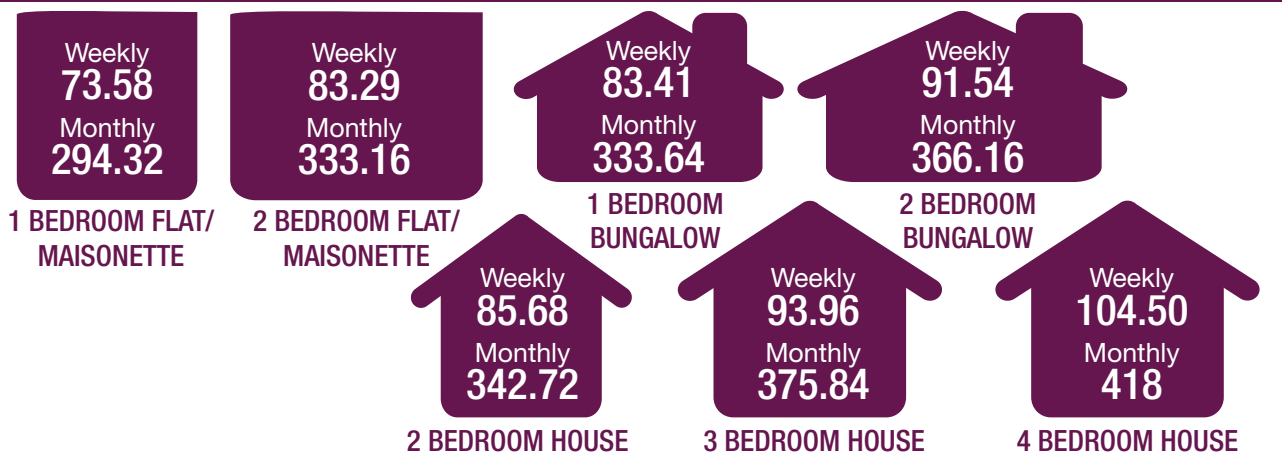
- Delivering quality services through enhanced digitisation and customer access to the Department of Works and Pensions and Universal Credit as well as wider welfare benefits
- Developing neighbourhood resilience through tackling illegal and high cost lending and fuel poverty
- Supporting economic and job prospects through tackling worklessness.
- Preventing homelessness through early help aimed at avoiding eviction across all tenures
- Supporting the development of a Corporate Debt Strategy



Key principles of robust income collection include:

- Independent assessment by Rent Income Excellence Network (part of HQN a national benchmarking group for landlord rent collection) endorsing the approach to prevention, education and enforcement around income collection
- Introduction of Rent Income Analytics tool to prioritise non-payment and highlight bad debtors
- Investment in third and voluntary sector. Including the Tamworth Advice Centre for debt advice and income maximisation support
- Close working with the DWP and job centre to collaborate on information sharing
- Supporting ‘rent first’ campaigns and educational material via a range of tenant groups
- Officers closely monitoring rent collection levels as well as comparing historic patterns and trends to assess unusual spikes in debt
- Basic general advice on budgeting, debts, benefits (including support/advice with the new benefit Universal Credit), and energy saving tips
- Referring customers to Tamworth Advice Centre (CAB) for financial skills - budgeting, debt advice, benefits advice, energy saving advice and Homeless prevention (including defending possession orders)
- Referring customers to the housing solutions team for assistance with homeless prevention
- Promote downsizing to a smaller affordable property, where appropriate, to make savings on household bills and assisting those who are on benefits and do not receive the full amount of housing costs due to under occupation (in addition, promote incentive to move to help with the cost of downsizing)
- Assist with applications for discretionary housing payments, hardship fund and food bank vouchers.
- Explaining the liability that comes with being a joint / sole tenant/ successor/ non tenant
- Explaining rent liability and options open to tenants following a relationship breakdown.

Average rent (excluding service charges) (£s)



6 Rent

	2017/2018	2018/2019	
Rent collected as a percentage of annual debit	101.93%	101.14%	Top Quartile
Rent loss due to empty properties	0.52%	0.42%	Top Quartile

REDUCTION IN EVICTIONS

The number of evictions carried out for 2018/19 was 13 compared to 18 in 2017/2018

Eviction is always the last resort

NOTICES

of seeking possession issued for rent arrears in **2018/2019** was **787** compared to **673** in **2017/2018**

Our quarterly

RENT INCENTIVE DRAW

continues with a prize of £250 to encourage tenants to keep a clear rent account

Stop Loan Sharks

Tamworth Borough Council works in partnership with the England Illegal Money Lending team to stop loan sharks operating in Tamworth. If you are a victim of a loan shark or wish to report a suspected loan shark you can contact the Illegal Money Lending team for confidential help and advice on telephone number **0300 555 2222**.

NOT SURE WHAT A LOAN SHARK IS?

If you can answer yes to one or more of these questions you might be borrowing from a loan shark:

- Did they offer you a cash loan?
- Did they not give you paperwork?
- Did they add huge amounts of interest or APR to your loan?
- Have they threatened you?
- Are you scared of people finding out?
- Have they taken your bank card, benefit card, passport, watch or other valuables from you?



Tamworth Advice Centre

**citizens
advice**

Mid Mercia

Advice line number:

0300 330 9002

www.citizenadvice.org.uk

Based within Tamworth Borough Council, Marmion House, Tamworth Advice Centre is run by Citizens Advice West Mercia. They offer free, confidential, independent and impartial advice on a number of issues including debt, housing and benefits

Tamworth Advice Centre

based within Tamworth Borough Council,

Marmion, House, Lichfield Street Tamworth B79 7BZ

Monday – Thursday 9.30 – 4.30

**Dial 818 using the internal phone based in reception
Free, confidential advice. Whoever you are.**

Key Changes to Rents for Social Housing from April 2020 onwards

The government has announced its new `policy on rents for social housing` which will come into effect from 1st April 2020. This new policy will permit an annual rent increase on both social rent and affordable rent properties of up to CPI (consumer price index) plus 1 percentage point from 2020, for a period of five years. For more information please visit the government website at www.gov.uk.

Similar to previous years all Tamworth Borough Council tenants will receive at least 28 days notification of their 2020/21 rent and service charges which will take effect from Monday 6 April 2020.

7 Neighbourhood and Community

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

Estate Inspection Programme 2018-2019

Estate inspections are carried out to assess the standards of service we are delivering, identify areas for improvement and generally identify any action needed to be taken to address tenancy breaches. We are committed to inspecting our housing areas on a regular basis. Across the borough, housing estates are located across ten wards. Each area is inspected once a year on a rolling programme. This is the fourth year the estate inspection programme has been carried out in this way

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

- Vandalism
- Abandoned vehicles / illegally parked vehicles
- Graffiti
- Litter and fly-tipping
- Dog fouling
- Problems with highway maintenance and street lighting
- Health and safety issues
- Neglected homes and gardens, tenancy issues
- Hot spots for anti-social behaviour
- The condition of hard landscape (e.g. fences, walls and paving)
- The condition of soft landscape (e.g. trees, grass, shrubs in communal areas)

Estate Inspections will;

- Provide a high profile presence on our estates
- Ensure cleaner, more attractive and safer neighbourhoods
- Improve the physical condition of estates through quick responses to residents' concerns and by identifying potential improvements
- Clear communal areas of fly-tipping/graffiti and rubbish
- Identify overgrown gardens/shrubbery
- Identify defective street lighting and estate furniture
- Ensure agencies take responsibility for issues identified within their remit
- Identify potholes and surface perishing to hard surfaces and uneven and broken paving.

A total of **380** issues were reported following ten estate inspections that were carried out across the borough of Tamworth by the Tenant Regulatory and Involvement Team, Caretaking Team and Tenancy Sustainment Officers.

Across the borough **215** roads were inspected and **106 (49%)** of roads were found to have no issues raised at the time of the estate inspection.



33 (87%)
ISSUES

were resolved
in full within

28 days

33 (9%)
ISSUES

were scheduled to be
completed under an annual
programme of works or
cyclical works, for example,
spraying of weeds
overhanging pathways

16 (4%)
ISSUES

were
service
requests

Communal Cleaning Audits - Tenant Inspectors

248 (75%) of tenants in receipt of communal cleaning have rated their overall satisfaction as either fairly satisfied or very satisfied.

We currently have 10 tenant inspectors who work with the Tenant Regulatory & Involvement team to carry out communal cleaning audits across the borough. Their input has proved invaluable. They make recommendations and comment on services which are reported back to the Estates Manager.

A full review of the communal cleaning programme, with Tenant Inspectors, was undertaken earlier in the year to conclude the following:

- Refresher training for all tenant inspectors with the Estates Manager
- More collective approach amongst tenant inspectors in completing scoring sheet
- Score sheet to be shared with the Estates Manager within the same week as the inspection to ensure immediate action
- Communal cleaning survey to be distributed to residents on a bi-annual basis and this will highlight target areas
- Half yearly meetings to be arranged between the Estates Manager and Tenant Inspectors to discuss findings, themes and any areas of concern

Regeneration - Tinkers Green and Kerria

Keys to the first six two-bedroom houses of the new estate were handed over to residents on the council's Housing Register earlier this year, providing much-needed modern and affordable accommodation.

Work is progressing well to create a new estate of 96 homes on the site of the former Tinkers Green maisonettes, which is due to be completed in August of 2020

Tamworth Borough Council, working in partnership with appointed developers, energy and regeneration specialist ENGIE, is building the new houses in Tinkers Green, Wilnecote, and at the Kerria Centre in Amington, in the largest council house building programme in the town for a generation.

7 Neighbourhood and community

The £19million construction phase of this huge regeneration project got underway at the end of last year following the demolition of 86 maisonettes at Tinkers Green and 36 maisonettes at Kerria. The project is being part funded through Homes England grants.

A new estate of 96 homes is being created at Tinkers Green, including 24 one-bedroom apartments, six two-bedroom apartments, 44 two-bedroom houses, 19 three-bedroom houses and three four-bedroom houses. An existing play area is also being upgraded.

A total of 44 modern new homes are being built at the former Kerria site, consisting of eight one-bedroom apartments, four two-bedroom apartments, 24 two-bedroom houses and eight three-bedroom houses, plus a retail facility.

It is anticipated that the first residents will be welcomed to the Kerria site in the autumn of 2019 with completion of the site being due in May 2020.

This significant investment at Tinkers Green and Kerria will enable the Council to offer attractive, modern houses.



Anti-Social Behaviour

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

We have again achieved the Housemark accredited standard for a quality anti social behaviour service (ASB). This was awarded after an independent review of our ASB and complaints service. This accreditation is valid for 3 years.



	2016/2017	2017/2018	2018/2019
Number of complaints received	247	264	299
Percentage of customers satisfied that they were kept informed throughout their ASB case	75%	63%	64%
Percentage of customers satisfied with the support given to them during their ASB case	88%	65%	66%
Percentage of customers satisfied with the outcome of their ASB complaint	88%	52%	47%
Successfully closed ASB cases (resolved)	99%	98%	100%
Percentage of customers who have already made a complaint of ASB, who would be willing to report ASB in the future	100%	83%	71%

Number of ASB cases: **262**

Number of Civil Injunctions: **0**

Number of Notice Seeking Possession/Demotion: **7** NSPs

Number of possessions: **2**

Nature of Incident	2017/2018	2018/2019
Noise	82	76
Pets/animals	25	24
Harassment/threats	29	42
Garden nuisance	29	48
Other	99	109
Total	264	299

7 Neighbourhood and community

Intervention

Intervention remains a key factor in how we deal with ASB cases. The team intervene as early as possible where evidence is provided.

This often prevents enforcement action from being taken.

In 2018/19 early intervention was carried out to successfully resolve **219** cases

299 incidents were recorded during the year compared to 264 incidents in 2017/2018

From April 2019

The Landlord Services ASB and Estate Management Team merged with the Corporate ASB Team to include CCTV, community wardens and multi tenure ASB service as one centralised service in order to streamline a more efficient approach to dealing with ASB and environmental crime.

20 Community protection warnings were served in this period. **10** of those proceeded Community Protection Notices due to non compliancy, to resolve the matter.

For more information about ASB see the Tamworth Council website link:
www.tamworth.gov.uk/asb-zone

8 Value for money

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

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

- Comparing costs and performance with other similar housing providers. Assess value for money (VFM), by using an independent organisation called HouseMark. This organisation compares our services to other councils and registered social landlords. HouseMark also produces an annual report which identifies areas for improvement
- Monitoring 'tenant satisfaction that rent is providing value for money'. We check this by carrying out regular tenant satisfaction surveys
- Continue to remove old inefficient gas appliances and install new 'A' rated appliances, reducing heating and hot water energy costs for tenants across the borough
- Purchasing existing properties has enabled an efficient and effective use of capital receipts funding, one element of the Housing Revenue Account capital business programme to increase its stock
- Senior managers regularly review budgets and the highest areas of spending
- Tenants are involved in the choice and appointment of contractors, suppliers and consultants to help ensure we get the right balance between cost and quality
- Spent more than £3,212,000 on improvements to homes ensuring that our core business of providing affordable homes to those in need continues to expand
- Co-regulating our services. Our co-regulation model means that tenants continue to review our performance and scrutinise selected areas of service.

8 Value for money

The following indicators have been agreed with tenants

DID YOU KNOW?

	2016/2017	2017/2018	2018/2019	Estimated Top Quartile*
Overall satisfaction with landlord services	78%	88%	88%**	82%
Average time between lettings	17.6 days	17.75 days	15 days	18.53 days
Completed walkabouts/estate inspections	10	10	10	Not benchmarked
Tenant satisfaction with communal cleaning	87%	87%	87%	Not benchmarked
Number of tenants on the database of involvement	617	557	479	Not benchmarked
% of repair appointments made and kept	95%	90.48%	93.3%	97.06%
Gas servicing CP12	99.99%	97.82%	100%	100%
% of repairs Completed on first visit	89.4%	89.34%	87.8%	93.59%
Customer satisfaction with responsive repairs	83%	95%	90.8%	91.23%
Arrears as a % of rent due	1.82%	2.47%	2.83%	1.55%
Number of evictions	10	18 (0.42%)	13 (0.31%)	0.17%

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

** Qualitative data suggests overall satisfaction (when aggregated across all landlord services) remains at around 88%. This figure was recorded in 2017/18 and remains the same at 2018/19 until the new STAR survey is undertaken in 2020/2021.



Top performance indicators as voted for by tenants as at 31 March 2019

Performance Indicator	TARGET	CURRENT VALUE	ARE WE ON TARGET?	TREND
Average number of calendar days to complete repairs	-	9.53		
Percentage of appointments made and kept	93%	91.3%		
Percentage of appointments completed on first visit	85%	87.8%		
Percentage of properties with a valid Gas Safety Certificates	100%	100%		
Average re-let times in days)	16 days	15 days		
Percentage of closed resolved anti-social behaviour cases	1.82%	100%	-	-
Number of closed unresolved anti-social behaviour cases	-	0	-	-
Current rent arrears as a percentage of annual debit	3%	2.83%	-	-
Number of complaints since 1 April 2018	-	195	-	-
Number of complaints upheld since 1 April 2018	-	23	-	-
Number of compliments since 1 April 2018	-	55	-	-

Tamworth

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