

Sheltered Housing Tenants' Handbook

**Tamworth Borough
Council**
Telephone 01827 709709

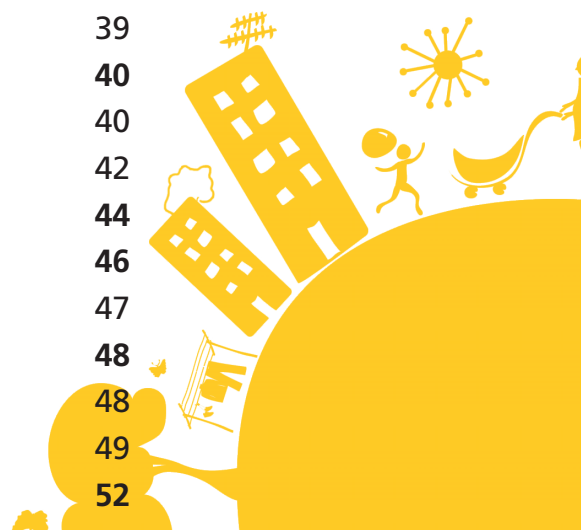
**Reporting Repairs
24 Hour Emergency
Repair Service**
Telephone 0800 183 0044



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Welcome to your new home



We hope you will be very happy here.

This handbook is for residents in our sheltered housing schemes, which provide independent housing for older people. This is a guide to our service which is full of useful information and advice. Please keep it in a safe place where you can find it easily.

If you need further information, or have a question about our service at any time, please speak to your Scheme Manager.

Aim of Sheltered Housing

Tamworth Borough Council aims to provide high quality housing services for our older residents. We offer individual housing for older people to maintain independence, dignity and privacy in a secure and supportive community environment.

What is Sheltered Housing?

Sheltered housing is designed for people, usually aged 55 and over, who can live independently or may need some form of support to live independently. It provides a secure and friendly environment in a community setting.

The benefits include:

- ✓ Keeping your independence
- ✓ Living in a good quality, well maintained home
- ✓ Social activities, if you wish to join in
- ✓ The opportunity to be involved in the running of the scheme
- ✓ Being part of a community, reducing the fear of isolation and loneliness that many older people experience
- ✓ Peace of mind for you and your family, knowing there will be help for you in an emergency

Tamworth Borough Council currently manages 11 sheltered housing schemes.

All flats have their own front door and are let unfurnished. All have either a bathroom or a shower room.

Each flat is connected to an emergency alarm system that will connect to the Scheme Manager when they are on duty. When the Scheme Manager is off duty, the alarm system connects to a 24-hour Lifeline Service where trained operators will assist you.

Each scheme has its own dedicated Scheme Manager who is available Monday to Friday from 8.45am to 5pm (although these times do vary and excludes banks holidays).

Our cleaning staff keep the communal areas clean and tidy.



Your Scheme Manager

What does a Scheme Manager do?

The role of the Scheme Manager is to provide a customer-focused housing management service to our sheltered housing residents, making sure they are provided with appropriate advice and assistance to maintain their tenancy.

Scheme Managers are also responsible for the facilities management services provided within our sheltered housing schemes which includes maintaining a safe and secure environment within the schemes.

If you have any individual care and support needs your Scheme Manager will signpost you to the most appropriate service for you to be assessed.

When on duty, the Scheme Manager will:

- Help new tenants to settle in and explain everything about the scheme to you
- Respond to emergencies, for example calling the emergency services when needed and contacting your relatives or contact person
- Discuss and assess your tenancy management needs with you
- Manage the scheme and make sure the security, fire safety and lifeline equipment is working properly
- Make sure the communal areas are safe, clean and tidy
- Report any repairs for communal areas and check when these are completed. They will also support you to report any repairs needed in your home
- Encourage and promote social activities within the scheme
- Promote a friendly environment for you to live in and respect confidentiality in dealing with personal matters
- Maintain and update records of any request, enquiries, or any complaints you may have, and respond to them where practicable, or refer them to the appropriate person
- Report any alleged abuse you may be suffering and seek action to remedy it
- When your Scheme Manager is absent for holidays or for long periods of time off, cover will be supplied by another experienced staff member
- Make referrals for care and support services to help you maintain your independence

All information that you provide to the Scheme Manager will be treated with the strictest confidence and will only be passed on to your doctor, family, Social Services or other emergency services, in the event of an emergency or with your agreement. Your Scheme Manager will discuss this with you when you have moved into your new home.

The Scheme Manager works from Monday to Friday from about 8.45am to 5.00pm, although these times may vary (and excludes bank holidays).

Scheme Managers are pleased to offer help and advice in any situation – you don't need to wait for an emergency. If they are unable to help you, they will be able to refer you to someone who can.

Personal records

The Scheme Manager needs to keep records of your personal details so that we can deal with any emergency that may arise. This information must be kept up-to-date, so please let the Scheme Manager know if anything changes. Your Scheme Manager will also need to know if your next of kin or family changes their contact number or address.

Make sure that the Scheme Manager has details about any special health problems you think we should know about, such as if you are diabetic.

All information is treated as confidential and will only be disclosed if we consider it necessary to carry out our responsibilities to you.

This information is shared with our external 24-hour Lifeline Service provider. When you activate your alarm, the operator will have access to your details. This enables them to identify you even if you cannot communicate with them.

Daily property visits

Our Scheme Managers are happy to provide housing management advice and assistance and make personal contact with residents Monday to Friday.

We appreciate that there may be times when you do not require this visit, perhaps because you have gone out early in the morning or are on holiday. When you know you will not be at home or on holiday, please let your Scheme Manager know in advance or alternatively activate your pull cord alarm and tell the operator you are going out and this message will be passed onto your Scheme Manager when they come on duty.



Your Scheme Manager

If you are going away for a holiday or a stay in hospital

Before you go, please tell your Scheme Manager when you are going, and when you will be coming back. If you are away for longer than originally planned please telephone your Scheme Manager to say when you will be returning. If you are in receipt of benefits, it is advised that if you are in hospital for more than four weeks you should contact and advise the Housing Benefits team.

How to contact your Scheme Manager?

In each sheltered scheme, the Scheme Manager works from Monday to Friday from about 8.45am to 5.00pm, although these times may vary, (excluding bank holidays).

You can contact your Scheme Manager by pulling your lifeline alarm cord or pressing your pendant at any time - it doesn't need to be an emergency.

You will be given both the office phone number and the mobile phone number for your Scheme Manager when you move in. You are welcome to text, phone or email your Scheme Manager if you need assistance.

Gifts

While we appreciate you will probably become friendly with your Scheme Manager, they must act in a professional way at all times.

For example, we understand that sometimes you may want to thank your Scheme Manager or celebrate a special occasion by giving them a gift. Scheme Managers are not able to accept gifts from tenants, so please do not be offended if you offer a gift and it is politely refused. Your Scheme Manager can explain more about this if required.

Although the Scheme Manager will do a lot for you, there are things that they are not allowed to do:

- ✗ Handle medication, assist or prompt tenants to take medication: a Doctor, Nurse, relative or carer can help with this;
- ✗ Pay bills, or deal with any other personal finance for tenants;
- ✗ Provide domestic or personal care services, such as preparing meals or assisting with bathing;

- ✗ Provide 24-hour assistance;
- ✗ Scheme Managers cannot accept parcel deliveries on behalf of tenants;
- ✗ Be a witness, power of attorney or appointee;
- ✗ Sign documents.

If you have difficulties with any of the above, your Scheme Manager can signpost you to the most appropriate support services.

Out of hours cover

In the event of an emergency outside of office hours when your Scheme Manager is off duty, you must pull your lifeline or press your pendant if you have one and the call centre operative will be able to help you.

Other useful contact numbers

If family or friends want to speak to Tamworth Borough Council they can contact:

Sheltered Manager on 01827 709709

Housing Manager on 01827 709709

Tamworth Borough Council on 01827 709709 and follow the instructions given.

Housing Repairs (24 hours) 0800 183 0044

24-hour lifeline service 0330 123 1335



Lifeline Alarm System



How your Lifeline alarm works

Available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year

Your Lifeline alarm allows you to speak to either the Scheme Manager on-site or when they are off duty, to the Lifeline Service.

You can activate the alarm via the speech module in your flat by pressing the red button on your speech module or by pulling the pull cord. If you have any health or mobility problems, we can also provide you with a pendant to wear around your neck or on your wrist. Activating the alarm will contact the Scheme Manager and the Lifeline service operator.

If you are in a communal room and need to raise the alarm then you will need to pull the nearest speech module.

You can be sure that whoever answers your call, they can take the appropriate action to help.

You can call for assistance through the Lifeline at any time. A trained operator will assess the situation and offer assistance. Don't hesitate to call if you need help or support whether it is an emergency or not. You will receive a friendly response whatever the cause of the call.

Don't worry if you activate the alarm by mistake - just let the operator know everything is ok.

What happens in an emergency situation?

If you activate your Lifeline alarm in an emergency situation your Lifeline alarm will call your Scheme Manager and if not on duty it will call the Lifeline Service.

Your Scheme Manager or the Lifeline Service operator will know who you are when they answer the call if you are calling from your flat, they will ask you by name if you are ok.

Try to stay calm and provide us with as much information as possible, as this helps us get assistance to you more quickly. If you're not able to hold a conversation, just call out "Help". We will know where the call came from and will get assistance to you.

Even if you are unable to communicate with us we will know where the call came from and, if we feel it necessary, help will be sent to you.

If you need us to contact your GP for you, please give us as much information as you can about your symptoms. It helps us when we contact the surgery.



Lifeline Alarm System

Your Scheme Manager works closely with our external Lifeline service provider to support our residents in the sheltered housing schemes, by providing 24 hour emergency response service when your Scheme Manager is absent. When the Scheme Manager goes off duty they direct the alarm system to the Call Centre, where trained operators are always available to get you the help you need or to contact your family. When the Scheme Manager returns on duty, they are updated about any calls or events that have happened.

The Lifeline service provider that Tamworth Borough Council uses is accredited by the Telecare Services Associations (TSA) under the 2009 Code of Practise in Installation, Monitoring and Response.

For further information on the Lifeline service provider that Tamworth Borough Council uses, please contact your individual Scheme Manager or Sheltered Manager on (01827) 709709.

Testing Lifeline alarm equipment

Once a month the Scheme Manager will carry out testing of all the Lifeline equipment in their scheme including equipment within your flat which means they will need to request access to your property.

The Scheme Manager will activate the equipment to confirm that it is working and that we can receive your calls. This makes sure that all of the Lifeline equipment on the scheme is fully operational.

If there is a fault with your Lifeline equipment we will endeavour to get this resolved within 24-hours and the Scheme Manager will contact your next of kin to advise them of the situation if appropriate.

How to report any repairs or faults to your Lifeline alarm equipment

To report any faults with your Lifeline equipment please speak to your Scheme Manager. You can also pull your alarm cord (if it is working) and advise the operator of the fault so arrangements can be made to rectify the problem.

If a Scheme Manager is not on site you can still pull your cord and the operator can pass your report to the appropriate contractor.



Safe methods of keeping the equipment clean

Scheme Managers carry out full equipment and pull cord testing every month in all communal areas and in each flat. We would recommend that you regularly dust your equipment with a dry cloth. If you need any assistance with keeping your equipment clean, please speak to your Scheme Manager.



Lifeline Alarm System

What to do if you lose your pendant

If you misplace or lose your pendant, please let your scheme manager know. They will arrange a replacement for you. There may be a charge to replace pendants or other Lifeline equipment.

Keeping your pendant at home

If you go out of your scheme (including visits to hospital) we advise that you leave your pendant at home.

Top Tips

- Lifeline alarm is not just for an emergency. Pull your cord or press your pendant anytime if you need to speak to us.
- Show your family how the Lifeline equipment works
- Don't tie up or put your pull cords out of reach
- Don't cut off or remove pull cords



Responding to Emergencies or to No Response

Accessing your property in the event of emergency – Key holder authorisation

With consent your Scheme Manager can be a key holder or authorised key safe number holder, but only if you agree. Then in an emergency they can access your property, or if you request can use this method to access your property to carry out their daily visits.

Accessing your property in the event of emergency – non-response to daily calls from Scheme Manager

- Contact tenant on all their contact numbers throughout the day, several times
- Contact tenant via their lifeline speech module throughout the day, several times
- Contact next of kin throughout the day several times
- If no response by 3pm on day of the daily call the scheme manager will physically visit the tenant's home to establish if we can see the tenant or they are somewhere about the scheme
- Try all contact numbers again
- If the Scheme Manager is still concerned about the tenant's wellbeing and they have failed to make contact with the tenant then as a last resort we will force entry to the tenant's property to do a visual check – the Scheme Manager will be accompanied by another colleague at all times to protect their safety whilst conducting this check – this has been known to save lives in the past and is only used as a last resort where we cannot make contact and have concerns for the tenant's safety/wellbeing.

It is important as a sheltered resident you understand that the Scheme Manager will physically check on your wellbeing if they do not receive a response to your scheduled daily visit/call. In the event of a non-response to your visit/call the scheme manager will follow the process below. If you wish to opt out of any part of this process then this must be at your own risk (Tamworth Borough Council will not be held responsible any outcome from you opting out) and you must sign and date to this decision, which you must share with your next of kin/family/carers so they too are aware.

Top Tips when using key safes and keeping your house keys safe.

- We recommend you regularly change your key safe code number. Your scheme manager can easily show you how this is done and support you if necessary, noting that during this process you won't need to share your key safe number with them.
- You choose your own key safe code number.
- You can change your own key safe code number, yourself if you're able to.
- The key safe code number can be changed as many times as you wish.
- When finished using the key safe, don't forget to clear your key safe code number from display.
- Only share your key safe code number with persons you trust.
- You don't need to share your key safe number code with your scheme manager and lifeline service, unless you agree to them having it for emergency access only (this process is explained within your sheltered tenant's handbook and tenancy management plan). Just remember to update your scheme manager if you change your key safe code number and they will update their and lifeline records accordingly.
- If you choose not to share the key safe number with the scheme manager and lifeline service, then please let your scheme manager know who to contact regards accessing your home in an emergency.
- If you have any concerns about the security and/or access to your key safe and your property, please speak to your scheme manager immediately.



Helping you stay independent/ sustaining your tenancy

We are committed to helping you stay in your own home, maintaining your independence and sustaining your tenancy.

If you are having problems getting around your home, your Scheme Manager can make referrals for you to be assessed for aids and adaptations to your home such as level access shower, stair lifts, grab rails to make daily living easier.

If you are having difficulty looking after yourself, such as getting dressed or having a wash, we can make a referral to have you assessed for the help and care that you need.

If you need to leave your home temporarily, such as for hospital treatment, you may need help when you are back home to recover and regain your independence, again we can make a referral so you can get the support you need.

If you have individual care and support needs your Scheme Manager will signpost you to the most appropriate service to be assessed as to the level of care and support you need.

The above are examples of referrals that may be discussed with you when your Scheme Manager completes your tenancy management plan with you. If your needs change over time your Scheme Manager can update your plan and keep a record of referrals for you.

Your Tenancy Management Plan

To make sure you are getting all the service you require, soon after you move in your Scheme Manager will offer you the opportunity to discuss your needs, assess any risks involved in living in your flat, and agree a tenancy management plan with you.

What is a Tenancy Management Plan?

- It acts as a record of any sign-posting or referrals made by your Scheme Manager to services to support your independence.
- Includes all of your contact details and your next of kin information.
- The plan will be discussed in confidence. It contains your daily contact arrangements. You can discuss how and when you would like to be contacted with your Scheme Manager. You may invite anyone else you would like to be present at the meeting, for example a family member, friend or health worker.
- You will be asked to sign the tenancy management plan to show your agreement and you will be offered a copy.
- The tenancy management plan will be reviewed at least every six months or sooner if your circumstances change.
- You may ask for a review of your tenancy management plan at any time you choose – just let your Scheme Manager know.
- All Scheme Managers have been trained in tenancy management planning and will respect your confidentiality. The sharing of any personal information with other professional agencies will only be on a 'need to know' basis.
- The tenancy management plan may show that you need personal care services or aids and adaptations to your flat. The Scheme Manager can arrange referrals for assessments for these services via the appropriate agencies.
- Your Scheme Manager will fill in your tenancy management plan with you. If you need help in putting your point of view across you can ask a friend, relative, advocate or carer to be present.



Costs / friends, family and carers

The cost of living in sheltered housing

You are responsible for paying all rent, service charges, council tax, water rates and any other utility bills while a tenant of your home. Service charges usually contribute to costs such as communal cleaning, scheme management, etc.

What about other costs?

You need to pay your own telephone bill and home contents insurance.

Paying your rent and bills

We have a number of different ways you can pay your rent and charges, including direct debit, using your Allpay Card at your local Post Office or any shop/outlet displaying the PayPoint sign, online at www.tamworth.gov.uk, or over the phone 01827 709709.

You may be entitled to help to pay your rent and service charges. If you would like to find out more information to see whether you may be able to receive some help, please speak to your Scheme Manager or contact our tenancy sustainment team on 01827 709709.

If you have any money problems you need support with or wish to discuss please speak to your Scheme Manager who can refer you to the appropriate support services. You can discuss this with your scheme manager at you tenancy management plan meeting or at any time.

Council Tax

This can be arranged for weekly payments, contact council tax on 01827 709709.

TV licences

You are fully responsible for making arrangements to purchase a television licence for your property.

Some schemes **may** qualify for a concessionary television licence, which means you may be able to apply for a discounted TV Licence if you meet certain criteria.

You can find out if you are eligible for a discounted licence by contacting the TV Licensing Authority, or you can ask your Scheme Manager to contact them to find out if you qualify. The decision whether someone will be accepted onto the ARC Licence, and at what rate, rests solely with TV Licensing. Tamworth Borough Council scheme managers only process the applications on behalf of TVL.

If your scheme has a Concessionary TV Licence **and** you are eligible, please inform your Scheme Manager who will apply on your behalf. The Scheme Manager will also collect your payment, which **must** be in the form of a cheque or Postal Order made out to **TV Licensing**. The Scheme Manager cannot accept payment by cash.

If you do not meet the criteria or your scheme is not eligible for a Concessionary TV Licence, you will need to purchase a full TV Licence.

Home contents insurance

Whilst Tamworth Borough Council is responsible for insuring the building, we do not cover the contents of your home. We therefore strongly advise all our tenants to take out a home contents insurance policy. For example, if you had a fire or your freezer defrosted following a mains power cut then we would not provide compensation.

We do offer a low cost home contents insurance in conjunction with ROYAL SUN ALLIANCE, if you would like to find out more about this please speak to your Scheme Manager.

Friends, family and carers

For some tenants it is important that your friends, family and other carers continue to give you support when you move into sheltered housing. We encourage social and assistance visits from friends and family to your home. Things they can do include helping with meals, paying bills, giving medicines and helping with internal decoration and cleaning and responding to emergency calls from Scheme Managers.

Your Scheme Manager may hold social events during the year that you can invite your friends and family to attend with you.

What carers can expect from us?

We are committed to recognising the role of carers, both formal and informal, and we are happy to assist them with making referrals and signposting them to information that may help you maintain your independence. If your carer feels that you would benefit from support from outside agencies or you require adaptations to your property, please ask them to speak with your Scheme Manager, who can help.



Repairs



Reporting Repairs

You must take proper care of the property and report any faults, repairs or defects to us immediately. Tamworth Borough Council operates a 24-hour emergency repairs service, the freephone number is 0800 183 0044. The out of hours service operates only for genuine emergencies.

Alternatively if your Scheme Manager is on duty and available to speak to then you can report your repair this way.





Health, safety & security

The sheltered housing service aims to make sure you live in a safe and healthy environment.

How to maintain security

Top tips for indoor schemes

- Make sure that the main entrance door locks behind you
- Never leave the entrance door propped open
- Try not to allow people who do not live in the housing scheme to follow you in – they should press the button for the flat that they are visiting
- Please report any suspicious events, in and around the building, to a member of staff no matter how trivial they may seem

Visitors book

All visitors are required to sign in and out using the visitors book provided in reception areas. This is to make sure that if there is an emergency eg. a fire, the fire brigade will know who is in the building. Please encourage your visitors to sign in and out every visit.

Bogus callers /door entry system

Please only let people into your home, or into the scheme, that you know and trust. There are many bogus callers around and to protect you and your neighbours it is important that they are kept out of your home and scheme. They will use various excuses to get in – for example, they may say they are from the water company or even from Tamworth Borough Council. It is therefore important that you keep both front and back doors locked – never leave them unlocked or ajar, even if you are popping out to see your neighbour.

Before letting anyone into your home or the scheme:

- **STOP** – before you answer the door to a caller, stop and think if you are expecting anyone.
- **CHECK** – that your door is closed and locked. If you have a back door check it is locked too and take the key out of the lock.
- **CHAIN** – put your door bar or chain on. If you have a glass panel or spy hole fitted, look to see who it is before you open the door. Always keep the bar or chain on while you talk to the person on your doorstep.

- **CHECK again** – Ask to see the person's identity card and check it carefully, even if they have a prearranged appointment. All genuine callers will carry a card. Close the door while you check their card. Does the person look like the photograph on the card? If you are not expecting them, DO NOT let them in until you have checked their identity card and if necessary called their company to check they are genuine.

- **PHONE CHECKS** – Check the company's number in the phone book and make sure it is the same as the one on the identity card. If necessary ring the company but use the number in the phone book, not the one on the identity card, to make sure.

If the person calling is genuine they will not mind waiting while you make these checks. If you have any doubts at all, do not let them in. If you have any concerns or suspicions tell your Scheme Manager or phone the Police.

All Tamworth Borough Council staff and the contractors who work for us carry identity cards and should show them to you before entering your home. If you are unsure if the person works for, or on behalf of, Tamworth Borough Council, please contact your Scheme Manager and they will be happy to double check for you.

General health and safety in communal areas

As part of their everyday role, your Scheme Manager carries out a number of regular safety checks on your scheme. These checks are recorded in the Scheme Health and Safety Files. They will also carry out a monthly site check and report any concerns they may have.

If you see something that you are concerned about then please tell your Scheme Manager.

We would ask that you keep the areas around your property clear, tidy and free from clutter to ensure the safety of everyone who uses the scheme.

If you have any concerns about safety issues in your scheme at any time please let your Scheme Manager know.



Health, safety & security

Legionella

Although it is fairly rare, you may have heard of occasional outbreaks of Legionnaire's Disease. This disease is caused by bacteria, called Legionella, which can cause breathing problems if someone breathes in small water droplets contaminated by these bacteria. Most outbreaks seem to start in businesses or large buildings, but there is a low risk that the bacteria can cause a problem in your home.

Although it is only a low risk within the home, we have completed a number of checks throughout our sheltered housing schemes to make sure you are as safe as possible.

However in order to help you stay safe in your home there are things you can do to minimise the risk of legionella.

- Shower heads: Clean the shower head on a regular basis. If you have been away for longer than a week, run the shower for a minute or two before using it.
- Water tanks: If you have been away for a period of time, especially in the warmer months, run the water on low pressure for a few minutes to flush the system. Keep the lid on your water cisterns.
- Drinking water filter jugs (for example, Brita types): Keep in the fridge, keep clean, and do not leave water in the container for long periods.
- Taps: Keep taps clean and free from scale where possible. If you have been away for over a week let the taps run slowly for 2-3 minutes when you arrive back.
- Toilets: If you have been away for a week or so it is advised that you put the toilet seat down and flush the toilet.

If you have any concerns about Legionella, please speak to your Scheme Manager.



Electricity

If your electricity goes off during the day, check with your neighbour to see if they have lost power too. Then activate the alarm and the Scheme Manager or lifeline service will take the necessary action or tell you what has happened, for example a general power cut.



Gas

If you think you can smell gas and there might be a gas leak:

- Put out all cigarettes or other naked flames
- Do not touch light switches or sockets
- Open doors and windows
- Raise the alarm by using one of the lifeline speech modules in the communal areas
- If you are able to do so, phone the National Grid Emergency number on 0800 111 999 to report the leak
- Do not go back into your flat until advised it is safe to do so by the professional staff, for example qualified gas engineer.



TAMWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL

Preparing for a power cut

Power cuts do happen from time to time, so it's best to prepare and plan ahead for this rare event.



POWER
OUTAGE

**TENANT
APPROVED**

Tamworth
Borough Council

Examples of what won't work during a power cut

In a power cut there are a lot of things in your home that won't work until power is back on.



	<p>Lights</p>		<p>Electric shower</p>		<p>Mains appliances eg. TV, cooker, fridge, freezer</p>
	<p>Lifts & stair lifts</p>		<p>Toilets in the town centre high rise flats (once toilet system emptied)</p>		<p>Communal lighting (however, some lights have a battery backup)</p>
	<p>Mains water in the town centre high rise flats (the pumps that supply water to the high rise blocks are powered by electricity)</p>		<p>Landline phones Most landline phones won't work without power</p>		<p>Hot water boiler You'll have whatever is in your tank</p>
	<p>Heating</p>		<p>Wifi (unless battery powered)</p>		<p>Door entry system</p>

Take a moment to look around your home and consider what will not work without electricity. If you have items such as medical equipment that needs mains power, you may want to consider arranging battery back-up options for essential equipment. You may need to contact your medical provider to discuss this further. It may also be beneficial to contact your energy provider and notify them that you have essential medical equipment in your home, so they are aware

who their most vulnerable customers are in the event of a power cut.

Living in sheltered housing

If you live in Tamworth Borough Council's sheltered housing, there will be emergency lighting within communal areas of indoor schemes and the pull-cord lifeline services will continue to be available during a power cut.

What can I do to prepare?

Prepare - Make a plan: know what to do if you have a power cut

- Keep a torch handy with spare batteries available so you can avoid using candles.
- Have warm clothes and blankets somewhere easily accessible.
- Have food which doesn't need heating accessible. Reminder, if you are in a flat or sheltered housing, paraffin heaters and other heaters with open flames or gas supply are prohibited.
- Keep a charged mobile phone to hand, as many modern telephones, especially digital or cordless ones, won't work without power.
- Write down important phone numbers and contact information. If your numbers are saved to a landline phone or mobile phone that runs out of charge you will not be able to access essential contact information until the power returns.
- If you have electrical appliances with battery back-ups, make sure they have fresh batteries and/or are charged.
- Make sure any medical equipment you have at home has a battery back-up and are kept charged.
- Follow your network operator on social media so you can find local updates. Find them at www.energynetworks.org/be-winter-ready.
- Save 105, the free national power cut emergency number, to your phone.
- Talk to your family/friends or neighbours about a plan in the event of a power cut of how you can help them or let them know you may need help.
- If you are given advanced notice of a 'planned power cut' consider preparing the following:
 - Hot water bottles

- Thermos flasks for hot water
- Bottle some cold water
- Plan your journeys and appointments around a power outage
- Check you have sufficient medication etc. if you can't go out during the power cut
- Notify visitors/carers/deliveries as there will be no lift service

What to do during a power cut?

- Stay Calm.
- Take care when moving around your home as if its dark there will be an increased risk of trips and falls.
- Switch off and unplug heated appliances like fires, ovens, grills, hobs, the clothes iron or any heated hair straighteners or curlers, in case you forget they were on when the power comes back on.
- Use items like torches and battery powered devices to provide extra light but please do not use candles as this presents a fire hazard.
- If you can, try and stay in one room as this will reduce heat loss while the power is off and reduce the risks of tripping over items you can't see in the dark.
- If possible, avoid opening your fridge and freezer to keep the contents cool and preserve your food for longer. If your frozen food defrosts, you'll have to eat it that day or throw it away.
- Leave a light switched on so you know straight away when the power returns.
- If you have a battery powered radio to hand, tune it in to your local radio station for updates on the power cuts and when the power may return.
- Follow your network operator on social media so you can find local updates. Find them at www.energynetworks.org/be-winter-ready.

Are You Ready?

Thinking ahead and being prepared for a power cut can help to make sure you stay safe, so remember to:

- Make a plan for you and/or your family
- Be prepared
- Make sure important information and documents are together in a known place
- Take necessary measures so you can stay informed for example a fully charged mobile phone/charged laptop/battery radio

The Priority Services Register

The Priority Services Register is a free service to help people who have additional needs.

The type of help available will vary, depending on your circumstances and the support from your local network operator. All network operators can offer:

- **Advance notice of planned power cuts.** If you rely on your energy supply for medical reasons your network operator can tell you about planned power cuts. For example, when there are planned engineering works.

- **Priority support in an emergency.**

Network operators can provide heating and cooking facilities or accommodation and direct contact and updates, such as by phone.

- **An identification and password scheme.**

This could include arranging a password or pictures only you and your local network operator will know. The network operator will use these forms of identification so you can feel confident they are who they say they are if they need to visit or contact you.

Being registered for priority services does not guarantee a continuous supply of energy. As supply interruptions can happen all year round, it's important you are prepared and know what to do if they happen.

Further information about who is eligible, how to sign up and how to find out your network operator see www.energynetworks.org/customers/extra-help-for-customers.

Useful contact numbers/information

Free national power cut emergency number	105
Tamworth Borough Council	01827 709709
Tamworth Borough Council Office Opening Times	Monday to Thursday 8.45am - 5.10pm. Friday 8.45am - 5.05pm. N.B. We are closed on bank holidays. Tel: 01827 709709. Out-of-hours there is a message which lists emergency contacts. Email: enquiries@tamworth.gov.uk
24 hour Repairs Call Centre	0800 183 0044
Non-emergency Police	101
Non-emergency Medical	111
Sheltered Housing pull cord lifeline monitoring control centre	Lifeline monitoring service contact centre 03301 231335. Available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week

Fire safety

Fire safety - fire alarm system

Indoor schemes have fire alarm systems that are tested weekly by the scheme manager. You will be advised of the timing of the test, which will mean the alarm sounding, so that you know it is a test and not a real fire.

Each flat and bungalow in an external scheme has its own hard-wired smoke detectors linked to the lifeline system, so when they are activated the Scheme Manager or the Lifeline Service can respond.

Fire blanket in communal kitchens

This is situated on the wall in the communal kitchen and can be used on electrical equipment and flammable liquid fires. If you feel you can contain a fire please use it, but if in doubt leave the property and dial 999. Remember to shut all doors on your way out. The fire blanket is checked annually and if used you should contact the Scheme Manager for a replacement.

Fire doors

It is the responsibility for everyone living, working or visiting to comply with the fire regulations in relation to fire doors within individual dwellings or the communal parts of the building, this includes:

- All fire doors must be kept closed when not in use,
- Residents or their guests should not tamper with any self-closing devices, and
- Residents should immediately report any fault or damages to the fire doors to the Council's repairs freephone number 0800 183 0044 (available 24 hours a day)

Fire prevention:

- Take care when cooking and never leave your cooker unattended when it is on.
- Do not use your cooker to dry tea towels or clothing on.
- If you smoke in your home (not permitted in any of the communal areas), be very careful when putting out your matches and cigarettes.
- Never smoke in bed.
- If you have an electric blanket, get it tested at least once a year to make sure it is safe to use.
- If there is a power cut, keep a working torch handy as this may be better than using candles. If you do use candles, never leave them unattended.
- If you are not using an electrical appliance switch it off at the socket. This not only reduces the risk of it over-heating, but also saves you money.
- If you live in a block of flats or on a scheme with internal corridors, it is important to keep fire doors shut at all times and fire exits free of any clutter. Do not wedge fire doors open in the corridors as this allows the fire to spread faster and more easily.

As soon as you are aware of a fire in your home you need to act quickly and calmly.

- 1. Alert everyone** – make sure everyone in your home knows about the fire. The easiest way is to shout and get everyone together.
- 2. Get out immediately**
 - Do not attempt to tackle the fire.
 - When escaping from your home, only open the doors you need to. Before opening any doors first put the back of your hand on the door – if it is warm DO NOT open it as this most likely means that the fire is on the other side.
 - If you live in a block of flats, leave using the nearest fire exit.
- 3. Dial 999, and operate the nearest fire alarm point, and raise the alarm with the emergency services.**
- 4. Do not re-enter the building.** Wait in a safe place, preferably the assembly point, for the emergency services to arrive.

If you are unable to get out of your home:

- Pull your alarm cord and if possible let the operative know what is happening.
- Try to close the door of the room where the fire is located.
- If possible place wet cushions, bedding, clothes etc at the bottom of the door to stop smoke seeping through.
- Move to the furthest room from the fire that has windows, closing all doors behind you.
- Open the window to the room, stand by it and shout or make a noise to alert people of your presence.
- If the room you are in starts to fill with smoke, lie on the floor or keep as low as possible, as there will usually be less smoke nearer the floor.

Fire elsewhere in the scheme

If you hear the fire alarm or see that there is a fire on the scheme

If you are in your flat, stay put;

- 1. Pull your alarm cord or press your pendant** if you have one and if possible let the operative know what is happening
- 2. Remain in your home unless told otherwise**
 - If possible close all doors and windows to your property.
 - Never attempt to fight the fire yourself.
 - Do not use stair lifts or walk around the building.
 - Do not put yourself at risk.
 - Always co-operate with the emergency services.

If you are in a communal area ie. stairwell, kitchen, communal lounge, laundry;

- 1. Get out immediately**
 - Do not attempt to tackle the fire
 - When escaping, only open the doors you need to
 - If you live in a block of flats, leave using the nearest fire exit
- 2. Dial 999 and operate nearest fire alarm point** and raise the alarm with the emergency services
- 3. Do not re-enter the building.** Wait in a safe place, preferably the assembly point, for the emergency services to arrive.



Communal facilities

Communal facilities and services



Communal lounge

The communal lounge is for all tenants. Tenants are welcome to invite their visiting family or friends to join them in the communal lounge.

Most schemes run regular social activities such as bingo, coffee mornings and luncheon clubs which are held in the lounge. Occasionally we welcome people from the local area to get involved in scheme activities. You may wish to invite your friends or family to attend some events with you.

It may be possible for you to book the communal lounge to hold your own function, such as for your birthday or a special anniversary. You should speak to your Scheme Manager about booking and availability. Bookings must be made well in advance. If you do hold an event, it is your responsibility to return the room to a clean and tidy standard and ready for use by the other tenants.



Laundry rooms

Laundry facilities are provided within most of the schemes. This facility is for tenants' personal use only and should not be used by anyone who does not live on the scheme, including family and friends.

Your Scheme Manager will be happy to explain how the machines work – however they will not do your laundry for you. Some schemes have high demand for their laundry facilities so in order to make sure everyone has a fair chance to use the machines, your Scheme Manager may suggest or organise a rota system.



Guest rooms

Some schemes have a guestroom available if you have visiting friends and relatives. These can be booked through the Scheme Manager for a reasonable nightly charge. Priority is given to visitors of residents who are unwell. Illness can be very sudden and unforeseen so we reserve the right for a guest room booking to be provided at an alternative scheme.



Pets

Unfortunately you can not keep pets such as dogs and cats in schemes where people share the same entrances and exits. However pets such as caged birds are welcome.



Cleaning in communal areas

Communal areas are cleaned regularly as part of the service we provide.

We would like to remind you that all tenants are responsible for tidying up after using a communal area and must make sure it is clean, tidy and ready for use by someone else.

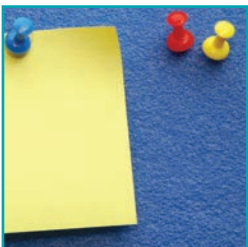
If you have a problem with cleaning on your scheme please let your Scheme Manager know.

Tamworth Borough Council Cleaners are responsible for carrying out cleaning in communal areas across our sheltered schemes. Tamworth Borough Council Cleaners do not carry out personal cleaning or other personal tasks for Tamworth Borough Council tenants .



Mobility scooters

We are happy for tenants to keep their scooters within their flats. However we understand that due to some flats' layout this is not always possible, so if you are thinking of getting a mobility scooter, please discuss this with your Scheme Manager, who can advise about practical problems, for example storage, re-charging, security. This is important as unfortunately not all sheltered schemes have adequate space for such equipment.



Notice boards

In the communal area of our schemes there is a notice board which will show a range of information about your scheme and the surrounding community. Your Scheme Manager will show you where the notice board is and can arrange for information to be included on the board.



Communal facilities



Parking spaces

There is car parking at most of our sheltered schemes for residents to use. There is no allocated parking for tenants and spaces are on a first come, first served basis.

Please be considerate when parking and do not park on pavements and walkways which may be needed for access by wheelchair users or emergency services.



Communal gardens

Some schemes have communal gardens which are for use by all residents and Tamworth Borough Council will maintain the lawned areas on a regular basis. However, if you would like to 'adopt' an area to look after, please speak to your Scheme Manager.



Smoking

In July 2007, it became illegal to smoke in public places, which includes all communal areas on our schemes. You are therefore forbidden from smoking in the communal areas on our schemes as it is against the law. This applies to all devices used for vaping as well as cigarettes, cigars, pipes etc. It can also be very unpleasant for others, especially those with asthma or who have breathing difficulties.

Smoking is allowed in the communal gardens but please do not stand near to a doorway or window and make sure that you take any cigarette butts and dispose of them within your own property, ensuring they are no longer a fire hazard.

Whilst we realise it is up to you whether you smoke within your own home, we would be grateful if you could show consideration for any of our staff who come and visit you. We know it is your home but there are times, such as when we come to carry out a repair, when it becomes our 'work place'. If you know your Scheme Manager or someone from Tamworth Borough Council is coming to see you in your home we would ask that you avoid smoking in the same room as them whilst they are there. If you decide to smoke in front of our staff we have advised them that they are allowed to leave your home without finishing their work. This also applies if a contractor is coming to your home to carry out work on our behalf.

In your home

Using your home

You must obtain Tamworth Borough Council permission if you wish to use part of your property or any part of the land adjacent to it for any form of business activity.

If you leave your home for more than four weeks you must tell your Scheme Manager, in order that we do not presume you have abandoned your property.

Hygiene

You must keep the property clean and tidy, making sure that you don't leave any personal belongings or rubbish in communal areas, otherwise we will remove anything you leave in the area. We will not be responsible for any loss suffered by you if we remove items left in shared areas.

Anti-social behaviour

Tamworth Borough Council has a policy statement and procedure for dealing with cases of anti-social behaviour. We want residents to be able to enjoy living in their home and in the community. We recognise that people have different lifestyles and that people's standards of behaviour vary. We will attempt to make sure, however, that actions of a minority of tenants do not make the lives of the majority of our tenants a misery and we will therefore take action against tenants who we believe are acting anti-socially. This may include possession action that could lead to your eviction.

Looking after your home

You are responsible for keeping the interior of the premises in good and clean condition.

You must not make any alterations or adaptations to the property without written permission from Tamworth Borough Council before doing any of the work.



In your home

Social activities

For many people, sheltered housing offers the benefit of living in a sociable, community environment. Interaction with other people enhances quality of life and prevents isolation. Scheme Managers work hard to promote participation in a range of social activities.

Tenants are encouraged to suggest the type of events they would like and to give feedback on the activities organised.

Cultural and religious pathways

We recognise and respect different beliefs and religions. We encourage all our tenants to keep their own religious affiliations. We are happy to signpost you if you have any religious or spiritual needs.

Some of the schemes host religious events and services. For all the latest news about local community event and activities, please speak to your Scheme Manager, or keep your eye on our notice boards.

Resident involvement

Tenants are encouraged to give their views on our service and we welcome feedback and new ideas. Involvement takes many forms:

Resident meetings

Regular residents meetings are held in the communal lounge. These meetings have an agenda and include health and safety and fire and security information. Residents are also updated on things happening around the scheme and social activities.

All tenants are welcome. If you have something you would like to add to the agenda, please speak to your scheme manager.

Meetings are a good opportunity to get to know your scheme community and have an open discussion about scheme activities.

Your scheme manager will advertise when residents meetings will be held.

Seniors United

Seniors United is a voluntary group of people who live in our sheltered housing. You can let us know your views by speaking to a member of this forum. The forum staff and residents consider services together to identify things that need to be done and improvements that can be made. Your Scheme Manager can tell you about the forum.

Surveys

You can also take part in customer satisfaction surveys which we do by post, telephone and face to face.

If you are interested in getting involved, or want to suggest other ways to improve Tenant Involvement, please discuss them with your Scheme Manager. You can also visit the Tamworth Borough Council website for more information on ways you can participate.



Reporting abuse

Reporting abuse and neglect

None of us want to think about abuse but it is very important that we are able to help and protect you.

What is abuse?

Abuse is a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any person or persons. It can be in many different forms:

- **Physical abuse** - this may include hitting, pushing, kicking and misuse of medication.
- **Sexual abuse** - this includes rape and sexual assault, including sexual acts to which consent has not been given.
- **Psychological abuse** - including threats of harm or abandonment, emotional or verbal abuse, humiliation and intimidation.
- **Financial or material abuse** - this may include theft, fraud and pressure in connection with inheritance or wills.
- **Neglect and acts of omission** - including failure to provide health and social care services and ignoring of medical or physical care requirements.
- **Discriminatory abuse** - this includes any harassment about race, sex, disability, religion, age and sexual orientation.

How do I recognise abuse?

It is very difficult to recognise abuse. It may consist of a single act or repeated acts. It may be something that is said or done to you, or something that you are forced or persuaded to do without your consent or ability to provide consent.

The abuser may come from a wide range of people including family members, relatives, friends, professional staff, care workers, neighbours or complete strangers.

What happens if I am abused?

If you are abused by anyone, or you believe another resident has been abused, there are several ways of getting help.

- Contact your Scheme Manager or the Lifeline Service staff at any time by using the pull cord in your home.
- Contact the Sheltered Manager on 01827 709709, Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm.
- Police 999 for emergency and 101 for non-emergency

You can also request a private appointment or write to the Sheltered Manager at the address below.

Marmion House, Lichfield Street, Tamworth, B79 7BZ

Your concerns will be treated sensitively and in confidence.

How to report concerns about a child or vulnerable adult

Even if you suspect abuse, that's enough reason to report it.

If a child or vulnerable adult (which includes elderly persons) is in immediate danger or if a crime has been committed, contact the Emergency Services immediately on 999.

If you have a concern about the welfare of a child or vulnerable adult, please contact your Scheme Manager or alternatively:

Child protection concerns:

Staffordshire County Council First Response Team on 0300 111 8007

Staffordshire Police Central Referrals unit on 0300 1234 455

Outside the hours of 8.00am and 6.00pm, all child protection concerns need to be made to the vulnerable child division emergency duty service on 0345 604 2886.

For adults at risk/safeguarding issues:

Contact Staffordshire & Stoke-on-Trent Adult Safeguarding Partnership on 0345 604 2719.



Reporting abuse

Dealing with harassment and discrimination

We are committed to working with tenants to stop harassment, discrimination and other types of anti-social behaviour. If you are affected by any of these, you can report them to your Scheme Manager.

Hate incidents

Hate incidents have the potential to be extremely detrimental in people's lives and in wider society. They can cause great personal harm and damage to community relations.

Tamworth Borough Council and its partners are committed to ensuring good relations between all people within the borough. To make certain that the council plays an active and prominent role in monitoring and reducing hate incidents, the local authority has devised a reporting system. Its purpose is to identify incidents in the borough and deliver a consistent professional approach to reduce and eliminate this particular often hidden problem.

For a copy of Tamworth Borough Council's Hate Incident Policy, please speak to your Scheme Manager who will be happy to help. Alternatively please see our website for a copy at www.tamworth.gov.uk.

What is a hate incident?

A hate incident is any incident committed against a person or property that the victim or any other person believes is motivated by the offender's hate against people because of their race, sexuality, disability, religion, age or gender.

Hate incidents can include the following areas:

- **Race:** on the grounds of a person's racial identity or perceived racial identity.
- **Sexual Orientation:** on the grounds of a person's sexual orientation or perceived sexual orientation.
- **Gender:** on the grounds of a person's gender.
- **Disability:** on the ground of a person's disability or perceived disability.
- **Religion or belief:** on the basis of a person's religion or belief (including no belief) or perceived membership of a religious group.
- **Age:** on the basis of a person's age or perceived age.

Some hate incidents will be criminal offences. The term hate incident includes crimes and non-crimes.

Examples of hate incidents

It should be noted that this list is not exhaustive or comprehensive but is meant to provide some examples:

- Physical assault against a person or group
- Harassment or intimidation
- Bullying
- Verbal abuse & threats
- Assault
- Damage to person or property
- Malicious phone calls
- Threatening behaviour
- Arson
- Offensive jokes or comments
- Offensive graffiti & fly posting (e.g. of a racist or homophobic nature)
- Ridicule for cultural differences (e.g. language, dress, food, music etc)

How to report a hate incident

If you are a victim or witness and feel the incident was hate, please report the matter immediately to the Police as well as your Scheme Manager. Your concerns will be treated sensitively and in confidence.



Equality and Diversity

We know we serve a diverse borough and getting our services right for everyone is important. We ensure we do not discriminate in a way that is unfair, illegal or unjustified.

This means we tailor our services to ensure everyone can access them. We do this by listening and working with all sections of the community, including hard to reach groups to encourage greater participation in the decision making process. To help us do this, we ask for information on people's, disability, sex, age, race, religion or belief, gender reassignment, pregnancy/ maternity, marriage and civil partnership and sexual orientation. This helps us improve our services by targeting them at the right people.

Objectives

The Council is required under the Public Sector Equality Duty to publish its equality objectives, these were reviewed in 2017 and are:

- To use customer insight to develop accessible services particularly aimed at those demonstrating greatest need.
- To ensure all council strategies, policies and procedures consider the impact on our diverse community/ workforce to ensure maximum inclusion.

In 2015 we had a major review of our equality scheme which was approved by Full Council on 15th December 2015, and has subsequently been updated with minor changes in July 2017. The scheme outlines how we will promote equality and diversity in the delivery of our services and to integrate the council's equality and diversity activities into our normal service delivery mechanisms. The full scheme and supporting action plan can be found on the Council's website www.tamworth.gov.uk.



Data Protection

Data Protection and GDPR

Your personal information

In order to provide you with the most effective service possible it is necessary for us to collect and keep some of your personal information. You will give us most of this information when you sit and discuss your tenancy management plan with your Scheme Manager.

This information is very important for a number of reasons, including:

- Helping us make sure your individual specific needs are met;
- Being able to contact your named contacts in the event of an emergency.

This information will be held on your tenancy management plan and on our computer systems. All tenancy management plans are kept in locked cabinets or filing boxes which are in a locked office. Our computer systems are password protected and can only be accessed by authorised staff.

All the information you give us will be kept in strict confidence. We will only discuss this information with other agencies, such as your doctor, if you agree or if there is an emergency situation and we feel you are at risk of harm. Please be assured that your Scheme Manager will never discuss your personal details or situation with other residents.

You also have the right to see a copy of all the information Tamworth Borough Council keeps about you. If you would like to do this please contact your Scheme Manager.

Moving out of Sheltered Housing

We hope you will be happy in your home, but if you are moving away, please:

- Tell the Scheme Manager as soon as possible
- Complete a Notice to Quit form, giving a minimum of four weeks notice
- Remove all belongings before you leave and leave the property clean and tidy
- Give all pendants and fobs back to the Scheme Manager
- All the keys along with details of your forwarding address need to go to Marmion House
- If you need advice regarding what needs to be done when moving out, please speak to your Scheme Manager



Your rights and responsibilities

Your rights as a tenant

As a tenant of Tamworth Borough Council you have certain legal rights. These rights, along with your responsibilities, form part of your tenancy agreement. However, in addition, you also have the right to:

Privacy

You have the right to privacy in your own home. Staff from Tamworth Borough Council will not enter your home, whether you are there or not, without your prior permission unless there is an emergency situation. As a sheltered housing tenant, you may have a key safe. Someone who has a mobility problem may wish the Scheme Manager to use this key on their daily property visits to avoid them having to answer the door.

Although you have a Scheme Manager available to help where needed, this does not mean we will intrude into your daily life. We will respect your privacy at all times, unless you or others are at risk or there is a health and safety danger.

Choice and personal freedom

As a sheltered housing tenant you have the right to live independently within your own home and to make your own decisions.

Dignity and respect

All tenants have the right to be treated with dignity and respect at all times, and living within a sheltered housing scheme does not reduce this right in any way.

As such no-one should be harassed or discriminated against on any grounds, including age, disability, ethnicity and sexuality. If you experience any harassment or discrimination please let your Scheme Manager know immediately. If however, you feel that your Scheme Manager or any member of Tamworth Borough Council's staff are discriminating against you, please report this to the Sheltered Manager on (01827) 709709 or contact Tamworth Borough Council on (01827) 709709.

We take all allegations seriously and will investigate your complaint as a matter of urgency.

We would also ask that you, and any visitors, are considerate of your neighbours at all times, especially when using or entering/leaving any communal facilities.

Comments, compliments and complaints

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

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

Comments and suggestions

We listen and learn from suggestions as well as compliments and complaints. Comments about how we can alter or improve can lead to a change in process, policy, actions, activity, or literature and material. We think we're doing things right, so unless you tell us we may carry on doing the same. What you tell us can really make a difference, we can't change everything, but what we can - we will. Please use our "Tell Us" e-form (available on the Tamworth.gov.uk website) to make your suggestions.

Compliments

We aim to provide you with an excellent service. If you have any compliment you wish to make, please use our "compliment" e-form on our website. For example your compliment could be about our services, about customer care, about recent events organised by the Council, about the Tamworth environment or about Council staff.

Report It

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

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



Your rights and responsibilities

Complaints

What is a complaint?

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction about a council service that requires a response.

How can you make a complaint?

To make a complaint you can:

- Complete an e-form via the My Tamworth customer portal: <https://mytamworth.tamworth.gov.uk> - By using My Tamworth, you can monitor the progress of your complaint.
- Complete an e-form via our website
- Telephone 01827 709709.
- Email tellus@tamworth.gov.uk
- Write to us at Marmion House, Lichfield Street, Tamworth, Staffordshire, B79 7BZ.
- Ask any member of staff to assist.

We accept complaints from third parties who have the customers permission to act on their behalf in making the complaint. (This can be from any person, for example a relative, friend, councillor, MP)

What happens when I make a complaint?

Stage 1 - We try to resolve issues quickly and will try to resolve things informally whenever possible. When we receive your complaint we will acknowledge this within 5 working days.

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

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

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

We'll acknowledge this within 5 working days and the complaint will be directed to someone senior to the officer who responded at stage one. We aim to provide a full response to your complaint within 20 working days.

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

Housing Complaints ONLY

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

Further detailed information is available in our Corporate Complaints Policy.

Housing Landlord Complaints

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

What does that mean for Tamworth Borough Council?

The Code was introduced as part of the Ombudsman's new powers in the revised Housing Ombudsman Scheme. The updated Code takes effect from 1 April 2022 and landlords will have until 1 October 2022 to become compliant.

What does this mean for you?

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

Once the updated self-assessment form is available, this will be published on our website.

Appeals against decisions

Complainants will be informed in writing of the Council's decision resulting from application of this policy and procedure. The response should detail information on how to appeal any decisions.

The Information Governance Manager (Monitoring Officer) will investigate and present the findings of the appeal to the relevant Assistant Director within 6 weeks of the request.

The Information Governance Manager (Monitoring Officer) will write to the complainant with their decision which will be final.

Complainants who are dealt with under this policy and procedure will be given information on their right to contact the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman if they feel the Council has not acted correctly in the administration of the complaint.



Useful contacts

Useful telephone numbers

Tamworth Borough Council

Telephone 01827 709709

Sheltered Manager

Telephone 01827 709709

Housing Manager, Tamworth Borough Council

Telephone 01827 709709

Reporting Repairs, 24-Hour Emergency Repair Service

Telephone 0800 183 0044

Emergency Services

Telephone 999

Reporting safeguarding issues ie abuse

Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Safeguarding Partnership

Telephone 0345 604 2886

AgeUK South Staffordshire information and advice line.

Telephone 01785 788 477

Tamworth Advice Centre offers information on your rights.

Telephone 0300 3309 002

Victim Support line offers help for people to cope with the effects of crime.

Telephone 0808 168 9111

RNIB offers information, support and advice to people with sight problems.

Telephone 0303 123 9999

RNID offers information, support and advice to people with hearing issues.

Telephone 0808 808 0123

Textphone 0780 808 9000

Email information@rnid.org.uk

Please see their website at rnid.org.uk for other contact options.

Notes



Notes

Notes



Alternative Formats

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

**Tamworth Borough Council, Housing and Health,
Marmion House, Lichfield Street, Tamworth, Staffordshire, B79 7BZ**

www.tamworth.gov.uk