

Tamworth's Local Offers 2015 - 2018

**Our customer promise to you
Every Tenant Matters**

Tamworth
Borough Council



Introduction

This booklet sets out Tamworth's local offers to you. A local offer is a level of service that can be expected within each of the five National Standards set up by the current regulator for housing. These standards are split into two categories

Consumer Standards

- **Tenant Involvement and Empowerment** - This includes how we listen to you and how you think you are treated and respected as a customer
- **Home** - This includes repairs and maintenance of your home
- **Tenancy** - This is about how we let and manage Council properties
- **Neighbourhood and Community** - This is how we look after your neighbourhood and the communal areas around your home and how we deal with anti-social behaviour

Economic Standards

- **Governance and Financial Viability***
- **Value for Money** - This is how we make the best use of the money we have to spend on the services we provide to you
- **Rent***

*This does not apply to local authorities

Housing providers are expected by the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA), the regulator for registered social landlords, to work with their tenants on Local Offers, services and the support that tenants should expect from their landlord which go beyond the National Standards.

Tamworth's Local Offers are our agreement with you about how we will tailor the services we deliver in the neighbourhoods we work. Our Local Offers have been developed in partnership with our tenant working groups, so are based on evidence of what we have been told is important to you.

Local Offers

As part of the review of Tamworth's Local Offers and our continual drive to deliver good quality, value for money services to you, we have made it clear what you can expect from us and this will be used to measure our performance. Tamworth's Local Offers will be reviewed annually in partnership with tenants.

Tenant Involvement and Empowerment

We promise to:

- Complete an annual Impact Assessment of all tenant involvement activity and regularly communicate how involvement and empowerment is influencing services
- Undertake an annual review of the Tenant Involvement and Consultation Strategy
- Provide a range of accessible opportunities for customers to get involved and shape services
- Provide a training and development programme for involved customers to develop their skills, knowledge and confidence to influence services
- Increase the number of involved customers and proactively target those from under-represented groups
- Consult customers on any change which affects the management of their homes or services we provide

Customer service, choice and complaints

We promise to:

- Be polite and offer assistance
- Treat customers with respect
- Extend the number of services available through our website to enable customer access at a time and in a way which is convenient
- Use fully accessible venues for the purpose of engagement and consultation
- Try to resolve customer complaints at first point of contact
- Offer a range of ways to make a complaint
- Regularly publish complaints performance via the Annual Report and Open House e-newsletter publications
- Use the customer complaint process to improve services

Understanding and responding to the diverse needs of tenants

We promise to:

- Treat customers fairly and equitably
- Communicate and provide information through a range of formats
- Continue with the collection and analysis of detailed information about current and future customers in order to respond to specific needs
- Use detailed information to help design and deliver services which match customer needs and expectations

Home Standard

Repairs and maintenance

We promise to:

- Provide a 24 hour, 365 day emergency repair service and respond to all emergency repairs within 24 hours
- Provide customers with a job number for all reported repairs
- Make a suitable customer appointment for the completion of urgent and routine repairs and aim to complete 90% of jobs with an appointment
- Aim to complete all repairs as a single continuous task
- Complete 90% of jobs right first time
- Undertake an annual service and inspection of all landlord-owned gas appliances
- Provide a Golden Ticket service for all households with tenants aged 75 and older
- Continue with the gas boiler programme to replace older inefficient boilers with 'A' rated ones
- Ensure that all health and safety works are fully completed and the property meets our lettable standard when moving into council accommodation
- Develop further options for the Handyperson service and give consideration for offering this service to other tenants.
- Continue to improve repairs satisfaction with response and planned works and produce results in the Open House e-newsletter and on our website

Quality of accommodation

We promise to:

- Publish the capital works improvement programme annually, on the website and in the Annual Report to Tenants
- Continue to survey homes on an ongoing basis and plan our investment to ensure we meet the Decent Home Standard

Adaptations

We promise to:

- Provide an assessment through a home visit for major adaptations
- Discuss your housing options in relation to your disability
- Ensure all work is carried out to a high standard

Tenancy Standard

Allocations

We promise to:

- Provide online help, guidance and support in accessing the free 'Finding a Home' website
- Provide assistance to vulnerable people by ensuring our information is accessible, assist in completing application forms and placing expressions of interest on your behalf
- Assign a case officer to all Band I applicants
- Make an appointment for you to view the property before accepting or refusing the offer
- Publish information about the homes that we let, including the band that the successful applicant was in and how long they had to wait
- Provide a sign-up pack with information to help you settle into your new home
- Clearly explain the charges and how much you will have to pay and offer a financial health check with potential tenants to ensure that the property is affordable
- Ensure that all empty properties to let are cleared of any rubbish, debris or furniture that has been left

Tenure

We promise to:

- Support tenants as far as possible to help them sustain their tenancy and avoid rent arrears and evictions
- Aim for no more than 5% of our tenancies to fail within the first 12 months. Where tenancies do fail we will look at the reasons why and adapt our services to meet identified needs
- Provide supported tenancies, for at least 20 tenancies, up to two years
- Carry out home visits to 100% of new tenancies within the first six weeks of moving in

Rent

We promise to:

- Provide a variety of ways for you to pay rent and information on where you can pay
- Notify you in writing at least 28 days ahead of any rent increase
- Ensure all new tenants receive an accurate welfare benefits check at the start of their tenancy and make referrals to Citizens Advice Bureau to enable income maximisation
- Contact tenants who fall into arrears within seven working days and ensure that every effort is made to assist them before the debt becomes unmanageable
- Provide tenants with an individual rent statement every quarter
- Recover all debts using a variety of methods including reasonable payment arrangements

Neighbourhood and Community Standard

Neighbourhood and Estate Management

We promise to:

- Carry out an annual programme of estate inspections between April and December inclusive
- Identify future estate improvements and enhancements for the environmental programme
- Remove 100% of graffiti from council-owned land and properties within 30 days and offensive graffiti within 48 hours
- Remove 100% of reported fly tipping within three days
- Ensure every alleyway is assessed and cleared where necessary at least once every 12 months
- Carry out one survey a year to determine customer satisfaction with internal communal cleaning achieving at least 85%
- Continue to recruit tenant inspectors to audit the delivery of estate caretaking and cleaning services.
- Clean communal areas every 28 days

Local area co-operation

We promise to:

- Work in partnership with local agencies, where appropriate, to deal with social, environmental and economic issues in the areas where we provide homes
- Review each year the outcomes we have achieved through local area co-operation and its value for money

Anti-social behaviour

We promise to:

- Acknowledge all anti-social behaviour reports in writing within 24 hours
- Arrange to interview you at home, or an agreed location, within a maximum ten days of receipt of your complaint and agree an action plan tailored to your requirements
- For serious allegations, contact you within 24 hours of your report to us
- Contact you at the interval times agreed in your action plan
- Keep your identity confidential and seek your written agreement where disclosure is necessary, for example a witness statement for court
- Work with partners including the Police and Community Safety partnership to reduce nuisance, anti-social behaviour and crime
- Offer you a range of solutions including support, advice and interventions
- Continue to be accredited by HouseMark and the SLCNG (Social Landlords Crime and Nuisance Group)
- Support the corporate Community Safety Hub
- Carry out tenant satisfaction surveys achieving a minimum of 80%

Value for money Standard

Value for Money

We promise to:

- Provide an annual account and value for money summary showing how tenants have benefited from investment decisions throughout the year
- Look at ways of improving how we work with our suppliers so we achieve greater value for money for the benefits of our tenants
- Produce an annual customer satisfaction calendar and publish the results from all surveys on the website
- Introduce service charges by 2016 to maximise resources available to the rest of our tenants
- Minimise the average length of time that our properties lie empty and subsequently the amount of rent loss
- Publish the annual rent loss and collection
- Hold a tenants conference every two years

How we will monitor

- Publish our performance against Tamworth's Local Offers in the Landlord Services Annual Report to tenants
- Publish the results from all our customers satisfaction surveys through our tenant involvement groups, Open House e-newsletter and on the website
- Publish how we have used customer intelligence information to improve services, increase customer expectation and opinion and increase the opportunities available to customers to have their say
- Continue to develop and advertise the customer dashboard, where tenants have selected performance they would most like to see across housing
- Publish performance and related outcomes through a programme of customer audits which will be determined by the scrutiny panel
- Ensure performance is scrutinised by our established tenant groups who will monitor the progress of all the Local Offers. Our scrutiny arrangements will independently assess whether we are meeting the commitments we have made

Contact us

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