

TAMWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL

# Health & Safety Guide

## Riverside High Rise Flats



**TENANT  
APPROVED**



**Staffordshire**  
Fire and Rescue Service  
preventing • protecting • responding



**Tamworth**  
Borough Council

# 1 Fire Action

## If a fire breaks out in your flat:

- Leave the room where the fire is straight away.
- Then close the door.
- Tell everyone in your flat and get them to leave.
- Close the flat entrance door behind you.
- Do not stay behind to put the fire out.
- If there is a lift - Do not use it.
- Wait outside. Away from the building.
- Call the fire service - dial 999.

## If you see or hear of a fire in another part of the building:

- The building is designed to contain a fire in the flat where it starts. This means it will usually be safe for you to stay in your own flat if the fire is elsewhere.
- You must leave immediately if smoke or heat affects your home or if you are told to leave by the fire service.
- If there is a lift - Do not use it.
- If you are in doubt - get out.
- Call the fire service - dial 999.

## To call the fire service:

- Dial 999.
- When the operator answers give your telephone number and ask for fire.
- When the fire service reply give the address where the fire is.
- Do not end the call until the fire service has repeated the address correctly.

## 2 Please do not...



### DO NOT:

Store gas cylinders, paraffin or other highly flammable liquids in your flat, balcony or shed.



### DO NOT:

Park or block access to the flats. Access roads and gates are designed to allow fire appliances to get as close as possible to fight fires.



### DO NOT:

Attach anything to the front door frame or communal door frame that would stop the door from fully closing and affect the smoke seal.



### DO NOT:

**Block your exit route.** This includes leaving rubbish or personal items outside your door, by the bin chute, on the stairs or by the lobby door.



### DO NOT:

Smoke in communal areas including the landing and lifts. It is against the law to do so.



### DO NOT:

Place candles or tea lights on, or near to flammable materials e.g. curtains.



## Emergency Evacuation Information

The high rise flats currently operate on a "stay put policy" in the event of an emergency such as a fire unless the fire is within your own home or you are told to evacuate by the emergency services.

However as a landlord we are required to provide emergency evacuation information to assist the emergency services should they need to facilitate an evacuation.

The fire service has asked us to provide them with the following information for every resident in the high rise blocks.

In the event of an emergency evacuation, which would require you to leave your flat and use the stairs to exit the building:

- Can you exit the building independently without any additional assistance?
- Can you exit the building with some assistance from 1 individual?
- Would you need the assistance of 2 or more individuals to exit the building

Do you use oxygen tanks in your home?

It is your responsibility to tell us if the above changes at any time. Even if that change is temporary. It is essential we know if there is a change so in the rare event of an emergency in the building the most accurate information possible is available to the emergency services.

# 3 Sprinklers

Sprinklers have been installed in every flat and on every floor (excluding the main staircase) and will activate automatically if there is a fire.

## How do sprinklers actually work?

Each sprinkler has a water seal held in place by a glass bulb filled with a liquid. As the liquid heats up by a fire it expands at a set temperature (around 60°C). This breaks the glass bulb and the sprinkler shoots out water. The water will come out at an extreme speed and pressure (up to 100 litres per minute) to suffocate a fire as quickly as possible.

## Do all the sprinkler heads go off at the same time?

Only the sprinkler(s) closest to the fire will activate, they don't all go off at the same time.

## Will the sprinklers create more damage than the emergency fire services?

No. Within 10-30 seconds of a fire being detected, an activated sprinkler head will discharge 35-100 litres of water per minute (85% less than emergency services). The fire emergency services would be likely to reach premises within four minutes of being called and then, they are unlikely to get to the source of the fire for another five to ten minutes. At this point, the fire will have inevitably become larger. Fire crews will then pump 1000-3000 litres of water per minute.

## What happens if the sprinklers go off accidentally?

Sprinklers are activated by heat and will not operate until the temperature reaches about 60°C. There is no risk of activation by smoke, dust, fumes, moisture in the air, burnt toast or cigarettes. It is also very unlikely that heat from cooking will set off the sprinkler. As the sprinkler is activated by heat we would advise caution against using tools and equipment that reach high temperatures near the sprinkler heads, such as steamers to strip wallpaper.

## What do we do if the sprinklers do go off?

The sprinkler system is connected to the fire detection systems (alarms) and will summon the fire and rescue services whenever a sprinkler is activated. If there is a fire in your property leave your flat immediately and wait for the fire service to arrive. If the sprinkler is activated and there is no emergency please close internal doors, open your balcony door and do not open your front door unless necessary. This will reduce some of the water damage to yours and surrounding homes.

## What if I want to check the sprinklers?

The sprinklers are covered by a small plastic cap to prevent the sprinkler head becoming clogged with dust or debris. You do not need to remove this cap to check the sprinkler. You may be re-charged if a cap is removed unnecessarily. Tamworth Borough Council conduct an annual service of the sprinklers to ensure they are fit for purpose, it is important you provide access to contractors when they come to check the sprinklers.

# Please do not...



## Living with Sprinklers

### DO NOT:

Cover sprinkler heads with pictures, draped fabric, cardboard etc.

### DO NOT:

Paint the sprinkler heads or their cover plates.

### DO NOT:

Shield the sprinkler heads or obstruct the flow of water with tall items of furniture or ornaments.

### DO NOT:

Hang anything on the sprinkler.

### DO NOT:

Try to test the sprinkler heads.



# 4 Fire Doors

Everyone living, working or visiting the block you live in must comply with the fire regulations in relation to fire doors within individual homes 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)

All communal doors and flat front doors are certified 30 minute fire doors. This means it will take approx. 30 minutes for a fire to burn through the door, which will dramatically reduce the speed of a significant fire spreading through the building.

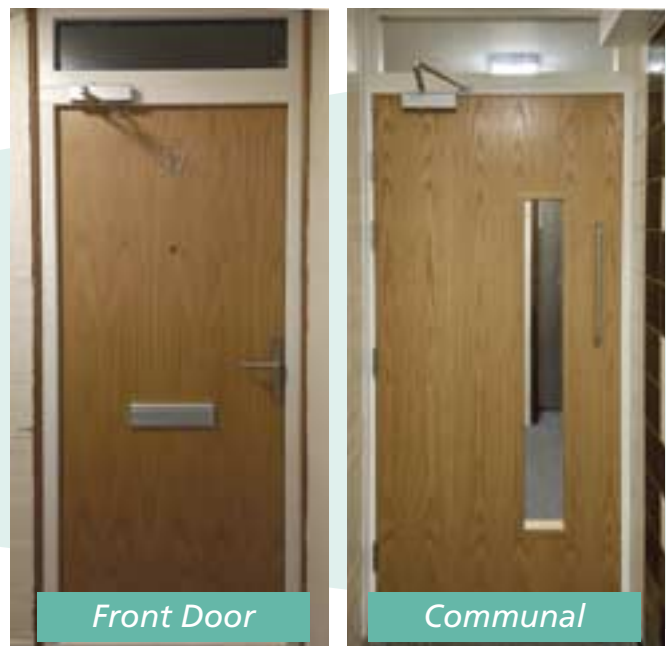
Residents must not affix items to the fire doors that might compromise the integrity of the door. Residents should also be wary when manoeuvring large items through your doorways such as mobility scooters or furniture that might damage the fire doors if knocked. Damage to the fire doors could compromise the door's integrity meaning a fire could breach the door in less than 30 minutes and put lives at risk.

It is also important nothing is placed around the edge of the door frame that would prevent the door from fully closing, and the door is not wedged open. Each fire door has a seal around the edge which delays the spread of smoke in the event of a fire. This would be compromised if the door was prevented from closing allowing smoke to spread and putting lives at risk.

These doors help ensure the safety of you and other residents throughout the building and it is important they are well looked after and maintained. Tamworth Borough Council will conduct regular checks to ensure these doors remain within fire and safety regulation and standards.

**If you notice damage to a fire door or the seal around the edge please call Council's repairs freephone number 0800 183 0044 (available 24 hours a day).**

If your fire door needs replacing due to mis-use or damage caused by a resident or their visitors the responsible resident will be re-charged for the replacement door.



# 5

## The safe disposal of rubbish and unwanted goods



There are bin chutes accessible on every floor, except for the ground floor.

### Bin Chutes

The bin chutes can be used to dispose of your day to day household rubbish. It is highly recommended to empty your bins regularly rather than allowing bin bags to become over full as they will not fit down the bin chute. The bin chute is approximately 29cm wide and 20cm deep so it doesn't accommodate large bags of rubbish and can easily become blocked with oversized bags of waste.

#### What can I put down the bin chute:

Kitchen waste • Food waste • Recycling • General non-recyclable non compostable material



#### What can I NOT put down the bin chute

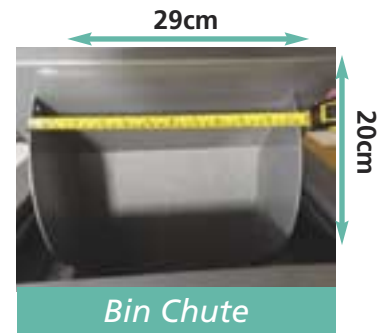
Sharps • Large boxes/packaging that has not been broken down into small pieces • Furniture • Human waste



Please note the above lists are not exhaustive.

Please do not leave items of furniture or rubbish outside your door, by the bin chute, on the stairs or in the lobby by the doors. Do not leave any rubbish on the floor by the bin chute, this can create bio-hazards and trip hazards.

**If your bin chute is blocked or damaged please report it to Council's repairs 24hour freephone number 0800 183 0044.**



### Do Not Flush!

It is important not to flush items down the toilet that may cause blockages in the soil waste pipe that connects your toilet to the main sewerage system. These blockages could cause waste to back up the pipe into yours and other residents' homes. Below are some examples of what not to flush down your toilet, please note this list is not exhaustive:

- Nappies
- Cotton wool / cotton pads
- Wet wipes (even if packaging says flushable)
- Paper towels
- Sanitary pads
- Condoms

Items such as the above should be bagged and disposed of safely.

## Bulky waste collections

You can dispose of bulky items such as unwanted furniture, a sofa or a fridge by contacting the joint waste team on 0345 002 0022.

## What other ways can I get rid of bulky items?

### Donate to charity

Some charities will come and collect items you wish to donate from your home.

### Ask a neighbour

If they can help you break down your rubbish to fit in the bin chute or to take it to the tip for you.

### Retail recycling schemes

When purchasing new items of furniture enquire if the delivery company will take the old one away for you.

### Visit a local household recycling centre (tip)

Visit [www.staffordshire.gov.uk](http://www.staffordshire.gov.uk) to find your nearest household recycling centre.

## Fly-tipping

**If you see somebody you suspect of fly-tipping, please if possible make a note of:**

- The date and time of who saw the tipping.
- What was tipped: How much and what it looked like.

**Please do not confront the fly-tippers and put yourself at risk** - If any evidence is provided about who is responsible, a Community Protection Warning could be served on the individual. Breach of the warning may result in a Community Protection Notice, a Fixed Penalty Notice of £100 and/or prosecution through the magistrates' court. A Community Protection Warning can be served without notice requiring you to take action within a set timescale for which there is no right of appeal.

**Report it** - To report fly tipping telephone: 01827 709709. You may be asked to make a written statement about what you saw. You can also report the details using the Council's online Report It form at: [www.tamworth.gov.uk/do-it-online](http://www.tamworth.gov.uk/do-it-online)

**Safe disposal of sharps** - If you find a needle or a syringe in a public place, please report it to the Street Scene Team who will collect them: Tel: 01827 709709.



# 6

## What is Anti-social behaviour? (ASB)

ASB is a very broad term and depends on the perception of the complainant. Some examples are listed below:

### Serious ASB includes:

Violence • Arson •  
Hate Crime • Harassment



### General ASB includes:

Noise • Vandalism • Graffiti •  
Vehicles • Animals • Fly Tipping



If you report serious or general ASB, we will record your complaint and investigate it in line with our anti-social behaviour procedure.

To report a crime you can do so online at: [www.staffordshire.police.uk](http://www.staffordshire.police.uk) or ring Staffordshire Police on 101. In the case of an emergency dial 999.

Report It Online via: <https://mytamworth.tamworth.gov.uk/do-it-online/report-it/anti-social-behaviour-incident>

Telephone the Tenancy Sustainment Team. Tel: 01827 709514

Email the council at: [estatemanagementteam@tamworth.gov.uk](mailto:estatemanagementteam@tamworth.gov.uk)

Write to us at: Tamworth Borough Council,  
Marmion House, Lichfield Street, Tamworth, Staffordshire B79 7BZ

For criminal offences, please ring Staffordshire Police on 101 or in the case of emergency, 999.

# 8 Security at Riverside flats

**In order to help protect the safety and security of all residents living in your block, please do not allow anyone you don't know into the block.**

Residents can help protect the safety and security of their block by following a few simple security steps listed below:

- Do not prop/wedge any communal doors open – this is not only a security risk but a fire hazard
- Make sure the main entrance door to your block is kept closed at all times.
- If possible please try to prevent unknown persons following you into the block once you have opened the main entrance door.
- If you or your visitors know and use the door entry code, please do not share with anyone else authorised by Tamworth Borough Council. Make sure you are discrete when typing in the door code to prevent anyone else seeing the numbers you are typing in.
- Do not release the main entrance door for anyone you don't know who have called your intercom saying that they need access to the block, even if they claim to be a contractor or worker of Tamworth Borough Council.
- If workers or visitors have an appointment with a resident and they need to gain access to the block, they must call the tenant/resident concerned, using the entrance intercom system.
- If you believe that someone is loitering or acting suspiciously in communal landings or staircases then contact the police.
- There is a door entrance camera available for you to see who is at the main entrance to the high-rise block. It can be accessed via your TV however your TV must have an analogue option as it cannot be found on digital TV. Simply switch your TV to analogue and auto tune your TV and it will pick up the door camera.

If you have any queries or concerns about safety in your block please do not hesitate to contact the Tenancy Sustainment Team on 01827 709514.

When ending your tenancy please make sure your door entry fob and any extras purchased for relatives or carers are returned to the council.

**These precautions are in the interests of your safety.**



Entry System

# 7 Estate cleaning services



## The standard of communal cleaning at your block

The Council's Cleaning Services Team is responsible for keeping clean the internal communal areas where you live on a regular basis.

We aim to keep your communal areas clean and as pleasant as possible and have a routine programme for cleaning.

Please note that it is the residents' responsibility to keep the area directly outside each flat front door clean and tidy and is not managed by the estate cleaners.

## Accidents happen

Sometimes fouling, such as toileting or vomiting occurs in public access ways and in communal areas. We understand that accidents happen and can not be prevented. However it is unacceptable to leave this for the estate cleaners to clear away. It presents serious health hazards for other residents. Please clean up any accidents immediately.

## Estate Cleaning Services

Every communal housing block receives a regular inspection supported by Tenant Inspectors. Satisfaction levels are regularly reviewed by the Council's Estates Manager.

## Tenant Inspectors

Tenant Inspectors are provided with the opportunity to audit the delivery of estate and communal cleaning services. Tenant Inspectors monitor the quality of service delivery against defined standards and undertake on-site inspections. They are empowered to call managers to account if services do not meet required standards and their feedback forms part of overall performance monitoring.

## How to report a problem with the cleaning in your block?

If you think an area of cleaning has fallen below the standard of cleanliness you expect or you wish to report any issues regarding the cleanliness of your block including graffiti, please let us know by contacting us on the telephone number below:

**Estate Cleaning Services**  
**Monday to Thursday – 8.45am to 5.10pm**  
**Friday – 8.45am to 5.05pm**  
**Telephone number: 01827 709709**

# 9 Lifts and alarms

Each high rise block has two lifts that run almost the full length of the block, except for the top floor. The lifts alternate between the odd and even floors.

## In the event of a fire

In the event of a fire or emergency evacuation you should use the stairs. The lifts will automatically go out of service if the main building fire alarm is activated and can only be re-activated by the fire brigade or when the alarm is de-activated. Please note the lifts will not be affected if the smoke detector in your flat is activated.

## If one lift goes out of service

Unfortunately the lifts can go out of service from time to time. While we always endeavour to repair our lifts as quickly as possible sometimes it may take a couple of days to resolve. It is very rare both lifts will go out of service at the same time, if you can manage stairs you will still be able to come and go from your flat using the lift above or below your floor.

We will endeavour to keep you informed and updated as to how long a lift may be out of service if it is likely to be out of service for more than a day. We will contact all residents affected to offer support for those individuals that cannot access a lift either above or below.

For any concerns during a period of lift works/repair or for further support you should contact the Tenancy Sustainment Team on 01827 709514.

The Council's lift contractor, will be on site as priority and will respond to any immediate issues. They will make every effort to have any lift repaired and in operation as quickly as possible.

**To report a lift is out of service please call repairs on 0800 1830044.**

**If you are unable to return to your property, need assistance, and it is outside normal business hours dial 01827 709709 and select option 1.**

**Office hours:**

**Monday – Thursday 8.45am – 5.10pm**

**Friday 8.45am – 5.05pm**



## If both lifts go out of service

It is very rare both lifts in a block go out of service at the same time, however it does unfortunately happen on occasion. The Council's lift contractor, will be on site as priority and will respond to any immediate issues. They will make every effort to have any lift repaired and in operation as quickly as possible.

If, in the unfortunate event that both lifts are subject to failure we will open the High Rise Social Club, during the day, as a temporary base for you to take shelter whilst immediate assessment is undertaken. You will have access to both bathroom and refreshment facilities.

If after an engineer assessment it is agreed that the alternative lift cannot be repaired within a reasonable period of time, we have emergency contingency planning in place which will be activated.

Your welfare is of paramount importance to us.

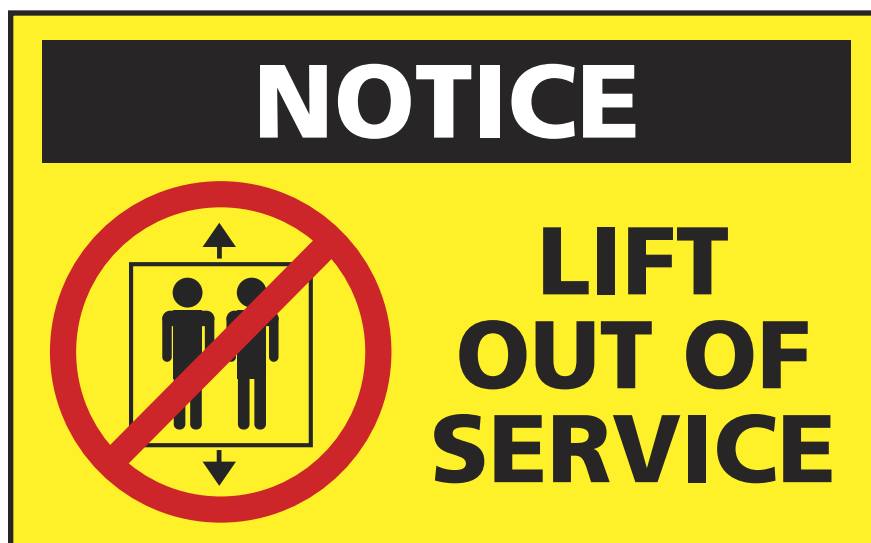
**To report a lift is out of service please call Council's repairs freephone number 0800 183 0044 (available 24 hours a day).**

**If you are unable to return to your property, need assistance, and it is outside normal business hours dial 01827 709709 and select option 1.**

### Office hours:

Monday – Thursday 8.45am – 5.10pm

Friday 8.45am – 5.05pm



## Things to consider if one lift goes out of service

### **What if I have or need to make a doctor's appointment?**

For this short period you may have to request a home visit by your doctor if you are unable to leave the block.

### **How will I be able to get to my hospital/doctors appointment?**

If you can manage one flight of stairs ,up or down you, can attend your appointment as normal. You will need to liaise with your hospital/doctors about your options.

### **How will I get my medication / prescriptions?**

Most pharmacies offer a free delivery service through your doctor's surgery.

### **I have witnessed a resident causing damage to the lift with their mobility scooter, what should I do?**

We ask you to report any incident of damage to the lift area to the Tenancy Sustainment Team on 01827 709514. Previous diagnostic reports and data analysis on lift breakdowns has concluded that in a vast majority of cases of lift failure/breakdowns has been solely due to mobility scooter damage.

### **What will happen if I can't use the stairs?**

If you are unable to manage the stairs at all please contact the council and we will arrange a visit to discuss this further. Please contact the council to keep us up to date if your situation changes and you can no longer manage the stairs.

### **I'm expecting a delivery/visitor, will they still be able to visit?**

If one lift is still in operation most delivery services are willing to climb or descend at least one flight of stairs so they can use the lift to the floor above or below. It is worth checking when booking the delivery if they are willing to use stairs. If both lifts are out of service visitors and deliveries can gain entry via the stairs, however this will require a fob to access them.



## If you are trapped in the lift

If you are in the lift when it goes out of service there is an emergency alarm button that is connected to a 24hr lifeline contact centre. The contact centre will be able to call the emergency services for you, and will contact our repairs centre to arrange for the lift contractor to attend as a priority.

If you need to contact the lifeline centre please follow the below:



If the lift has a red button with the words "Tunstall" on it press that button. It will then beep until the call connects with the 24hr Lifeline center.



If there is no "Tunstall" button press the button with the word "alarm" beneath it. Hold this button for a minimum of 3 seconds.

Depending on how busy the contact centre is it can sometimes take a few minutes for the call to connect.

If you accidentally activate the alarm button please wait for the call to connect and inform the call centre it was an accident. You will not get into trouble for activating the alarm in error. However if the alarm does go off and the contact centre is unable to communicate with anyone in the lift they must respond as though someone is trapped and in need of assistance and will escalate with the appropriate emergency services.

# 10 Communal areas

**It is important for residents that the lobbies between flats, along with all other communal access, are kept clear at all times of any items that may impede a person's exit in the event of an emergency or that may accelerate the burn or ignition of a fire.**

In the event of an emergency, such as a fire, items in a communal area could create a real hazard for yourself and other residents by obstructing your exit or rescue from the property or by accelerating the fire putting more lives at risk.

All communal areas must remain, as the fire service refer to, a sterile environment. Below are some examples of the things that should not be left in communal areas or outside your front door: *(Please note this list is not exhaustive)*

Rubbish *(this includes by the bin chute if its blocked or bulky rubbish waiting for collection. Bulky waste must go outside on the day of collection).*

Bikes • Prams • Mobility Scooters

Walking Aides • Wheelchairs

Seasonal Decorations

Door Mats • Umbrella Stands

Communal areas in the high rise blocks are cleaned on a regular basis. However please note that it is the residents responsibility to keep the area outside each flat front door clean and tidy and is not managed by the estate cleaners.

The high rise blocks are frequently inspected by the Housing Regulatory and High Rise Co-ordinator as well as regularly serviced by cleaners, caretakers and council contractors.

If items such as those listed above are found by council staff or reported by high rise residents, the housing officer for the area will be notified and make the necessary investigation.

If any evidence is provided about who is responsible, a community protection warning could be served on the individual. Breach of the warning may result in a community protection notice, a fixed penalty notice of £100 and/or prosecution through the magistrates' court.

A community protection warning can be served without notice requiring you to take action within a set timescale for which there is no right of appeal. It can also set out positive requirements, for example to stop parking your mobility scooter outside your flat.



# 11 Balconies and basement sheds

## Balconies

Every flat in the high rise blocks has a small outdoor balcony space.

Please ensure any items you hand on your balcony or balcony walls are securely attached. They could blow off very easily on a windy and be a real hazard to people below.

For your own safety and the safety of other residents in the building you must not store any flammable items out on the balcony. This includes but is not limited to:

Paraffin Lamps • Heaters

Gas Cylinders

BBQs • BBQ Fuel

Tins of paint • Aerosol cans

Please bear in mind the balconies are made of glass, and while the risk is very low, could magnify sunlight to create a fire hazard so please be mindful of what items you store on the balcony that could be easily ignited.

Please refrain from throwing any items over your balcony. This is extremely dangerous and could cause harm to people on balconies below or pedestrians on the ground below.

If you witness residents throwing items over the balconies please report it as soon as possible so it can be investigated further.

Report It Online via: <https://mytamworth.tamworth.gov.uk/do-it-online/report-it/anti-social-behaviour-incident>

Telephone the Tenancy Sustainment Team. Tel: 01827 709514

Email the council at: [estatementmanagementteam@tamworth.gov.uk](mailto:estatementmanagementteam@tamworth.gov.uk)

## Basement storage sheds

Most, but not all, flats have access to a small storage space referred to as a shed in the basement of the block.

Access to the basement door is with the same fob used to open the main front door to the block. It is important, as with the front door, you do not allow anyone to follow you into the basement and that you ensure the door closes fully behind you.

Any items left in the shed are stored at your own risk and it is highly recommended that you do not store items of high value in the shed.

It is also important you make sure the items stored in your shed are included in your household contents insurance as they will not be covered by the council's building insurance.

You must not store any flammable items in your storage shed.

Mobility scooters can be stored inside your shed but they must not be left in communal areas of the basement.

Motorbikes and other items with fuel engines are prohibited from the basement, they can not be stored in your shed or any communal access area due to the risk of fire.

Please do not leave bulky waste such as furniture, or items of rubbish in communal areas of the basement. These can cause trip and fire hazards to other residents and could be considered as fly tipping. If you need to dispose of large items please refer to page 8 for information on bulk waste collections.

## Mobility Scooter Safety Advice

Mobility scooter safety is usually mentioned when talking about road use or riding on pavements around pedestrians BUT there is an equal and potentially more dangerous risk associated with scooter safety and the risk of fires.

The main risk occurs around the storing and charging of mobility scooters.

Here is some advice on what can be done to increase mobility scooter safety and to reduce the risk of fire.

- Don't leave your scooter battery on charge overnight.
- When charging, don't block your escape route and always make sure the area is properly ventilated.
- Make sure you have a smoke alarm fitted. Remember to check the batteries and test the alarm regularly.
- Make sure you have your mobility scooter properly serviced regularly which should include portable appliance testing to ensure electrical safety.

### Can I leave my mobility scooter on the landing outside my flat?

No - any mobility scooter or wheelchair left on the landing is a serious fire hazard, as highlighted by the fire service. Mobility scooters parked outside flats will be reported to the Housing Officer and a Community Protection Notice could be served.

### Leaving and entering your property with your mobility scooter

Mobility Scooters are incredibly useful aides to enable tenants with limited mobility continue to be able to get out and about independently. However when the high rise blocks where first built they were not designed with mobility scooters in mind and turning circles in and out of the lifts and through flat front doors can be tight.

When purchasing a mobility scooter please give consideration to the size of the scooter and the space available to manoeuvre it to make sure you do not damage your scooter, the lifts or your front door.

You must make sure that any mobility scooter is able to safely enter and exit the lift without any contact with the landing doors or internal panels.

The force of a scooter impact with the lift causes significant issues with the door configuration and consequently results in mechanical failure and breakdown.

If damage is caused to a door, lift or your property by a mobility scooter you may be charged for the cost of the repair.

Some residents opt to hire a garage to store their mobility scooter in. If you would like more information on renting a garage please call 01827 70951.



**Tamworth**  
Borough Council

# 12 Useful numbers



## How to report repairs in your block?

Sadly, in spite of our best efforts, some communal areas are occasionally damaged or vandalised. If you come across damage or areas in a poor state of repair, please let us know by contacting us on:

A graphic of a paint roller with a black handle and a green roller, positioned on the right side of a large, horizontal, green brushstroke that spans across the width of the page.

**Repairs Call Centre: 0800 183 0044**

**Bulky waste collection: 0345 002 0022**

**Tamworth Borough Council: 01827 709 709**

**Tenancy Sustainment Team: 01827 709 514**

**For non-emergency fire information:  
0800 0241 999**

**Non emergency police: 101**

**Non emergency medical: 111**

**Notes**

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.



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

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.

## 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](http://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](http://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](http://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: <a href="mailto:enquiries@tamworth.gov.uk">enquiries@tamworth.gov.uk</a>
24 hour Repairs Call Centre	0800 183 0044
Non-emergency Police	101
Non-emergency Medical	111



# 13 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 to make your suggestions, this can be found on the council's website via [www.tamworth.gov.uk/tell-us-your-suggestions](http://www.tamworth.gov.uk/tell-us-your-suggestions)

## Compliments

We aim to provide you with an excellent service. If you have any compliments you wish to make, please use our compliment e-form available on our website via [www.tamworth.gov.uk/Compliment-form](http://www.tamworth.gov.uk/Compliment-form). 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.

If you can not access the e-form you can pass your compliment on via:

- Telephone: 01827 709709.
- Email: [tellus@tamworth.gov.uk](mailto:tellus@tamworth.gov.uk)
- Write to us at: Marmion House, Lichfield Street, Tamworth, Staffordshire, B79 7BZ.
- Ask any member of staff to assist.

## 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.

You can see what you can report online via [www.tamworth.gov.uk/do-it-online](http://www.tamworth.gov.uk/do-it-online)

## 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: [mytamworth.tamworth.gov.uk](http://mytamworth.tamworth.gov.uk) - By using My Tamworth, you can monitor the progress of your complaint.
- Complete an e-form via our website: [www.tamworth.gov.uk/making-complaint](http://www.tamworth.gov.uk/making-complaint)
- Telephone: 01827 709709.
- Email: [tellus@tamworth.gov.uk](mailto: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 and Social Care Ombudsman. More information is available via [www.lgo.org.uk](http://www.lgo.org.uk)

## Housing Complaints ONLY

You can contact the Housing Ombudsman Service via [www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk](http://www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk) 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. This policy can be accessed via [www.tamworth.gov.uk/comments-compliments-complaints](http://www.tamworth.gov.uk/comments-compliments-complaints)

### 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.

# Notes



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# Notes

# Notes



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**If you require this information in another format or language, please call 01827 709709 or email: [enquiries@tamworth.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@tamworth.gov.uk)**



**[www.tamworth.gov.uk](http://www.tamworth.gov.uk)**

Marmion House, Lichfield Street, Tamworth,  
Staffordshire B79 7BZ. Tel: 01827 709709

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