

**My Vote**

*My Voice*

**What do local  
councils do and  
how does your  
council affect  
your life?**





## What do local councils do?

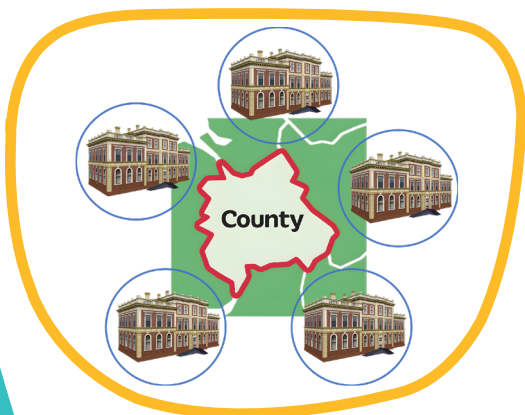
Councils make decisions that **affect your daily life.**



Your **local council** is in charge of important services in your area.



The local council helps make sure things run smoothly where you live.

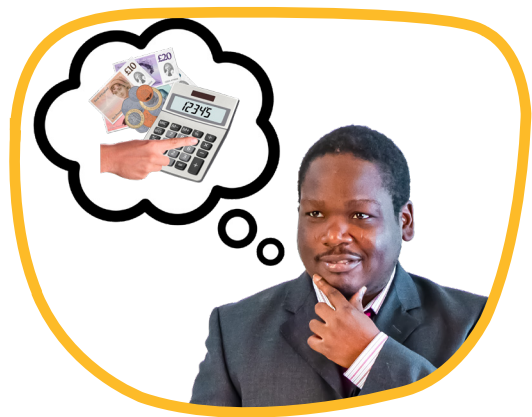


Some areas are also looked after by Combined Authority Mayors. Read our **separate guide** to learn more about this:  
<https://bit.ly/4knpzZ8>



## Things your Council looks after:

**Council tax** – Your local council collects money through council tax to help pay for local services.



They have to make difficult decisions about how much tax to collect and what to spend it on.



This means choosing which services to fund and how to use money in the best way.



Your council does many things. On the next page are some that might be **important to you**.



## Social care

Social care is supporting people who need help at home or in the community.



## Blue Badge parking

Blue badges are special parking permits for disabled people.



## Accessible transport

Services like offering discounts on taxis and making sure buses are accessible.



## Accessible housing

Help with home accessibility and finding a house or keeping a house.



**Ensuring accessibility of local leisure centres** such as parks, libraries, and sport facilities.

**Other important services:**



**Policing**

Local councils work with the police to help keep areas safe. They do not run the police, but they can help with community safety, CCTV cameras, and crime prevention projects.



**Bins and recycling**

Collecting rubbish from your neighbourhood.



**Libraries and community centres**

Places to meet people and join activities.



## Roads and pavements

Fixing potholes and keeping paths safe.



## Schools and education

Making sure children and young people get the help they need.



## Help with money

Benefits advice and emergency help with money.



## How your council makes decisions:

The council is run by **elected councillors**. These are people chosen by you and other people in your area!



A **council leader** or a **mayor** leads the councillors. Whether you have a council leader or mayor depends on the area where you live.



The council also follows **national laws and rules**, so it cannot do everything it wants.



Councillors listen to the needs of people in the area.



### **What councils can and cannot do:**

**Councils can** provide services like housing, social care, and public transport.



They can make local rules about things like parking and rubbish collection.



They can work with the police to help keep your area safe.



They can decide how to spend money on local services.



They can support schools and libraries in your community.





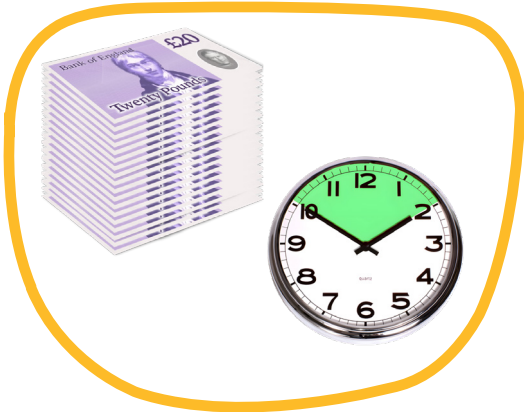
**Councils cannot** make national laws



They cannot control benefits like Universal Credit



They cannot change NHS services



They cannot solve all problems straight away – some changes take time and money.



## How to contact your local council:

Each council has a **website** where you can find help.



You can also **call them** or visit their offices



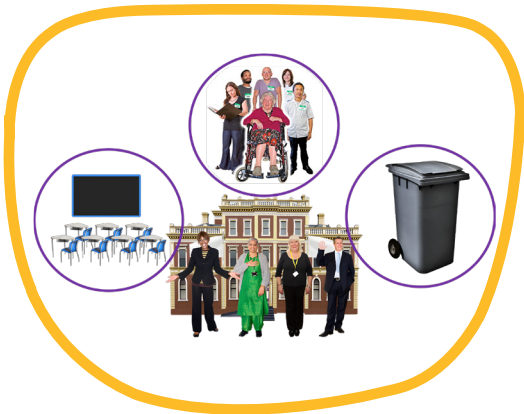
Here is a link to further information on how to contact your local council:  
<https://bit.ly/4i470HX>



If you need extra help, you can ask for a **support worker or advocate.**



Your voice matters!



Your council makes decisions that affect your daily life.



Voting in **local elections** helps choose the people who make these important decisions.



See if you are eligible to vote here:  
<https://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/voting-and-elections/who-can-vote/which-elections-you-can-vote>



Read more about how to register to vote here:  
<https://www.myvotemyvoice.org.uk/voting/register-to-vote/how-to-register-to-vote/>



You have a **right to be heard**.  
You can have your say by:



Voting in the next local election.



Speaking to your local councillor.



Going to council meetings (some are online).



Filling in surveys or petitions.



**Check out our library of accessible resources on voting!**

**<https://www.myvotemyvoice.org.uk/voting-resources/>**

**My Voice My Vote is on a mission to encourage people with learning disabilities and autistic people to vote in the Local Elections.**

**Visit [www.myvotemyvoice.org.uk](http://www.myvotemyvoice.org.uk) to find out more.**

## **Get in touch:**

info@myvotemyvoice.org.uk  
#MyVoteMyVoice  
#DisabledVotesMatterUK  
#RegisterToVote!



With thanks to The Electoral Commission and Photosymbols