



## Local Government Structure 2010

### The Background

Local government in Britain is structured in two contrasting ways. In Scotland, Wales and parts of England, a single tier "all purpose council" is responsible for all local authority functions (Unitary, Metropolitan or London Borough). The remainder of England has a two tier system, in which two separate councils divide responsibilities between district and county councils.

In brief, these are:

### Single Tier Authorities

Wales: 22 **Unitary Authorities**

England: 36 **Metropolitan Authorities**

- North East: 5 authorities
- North West: 15 authorities
- West Midlands: 7 authorities
- Yorkshire and Humberside: 9 authorities

33 **London Boroughs** (London also has the Greater London Authority)

56 **English Unitary Authorities** (including Isles of Scilly)

### Two Tier Authorities in England

27 **County Councils**

201 **District Councils**

**373 Local authorities in England and Wales**

### Revenue

Local authorities raise their income in a number of different ways, with councils tax only raising around 25 per cent of total local authority revenue. The rest is made up of central government grant which, at around 55 per cent, forms the majority of local government revenue. The Non Domestic Rate is a charge to businesses which is set by central government and this raises about 20 per cent of local authority revenue with the remainder being made up by charges for services and reserves.

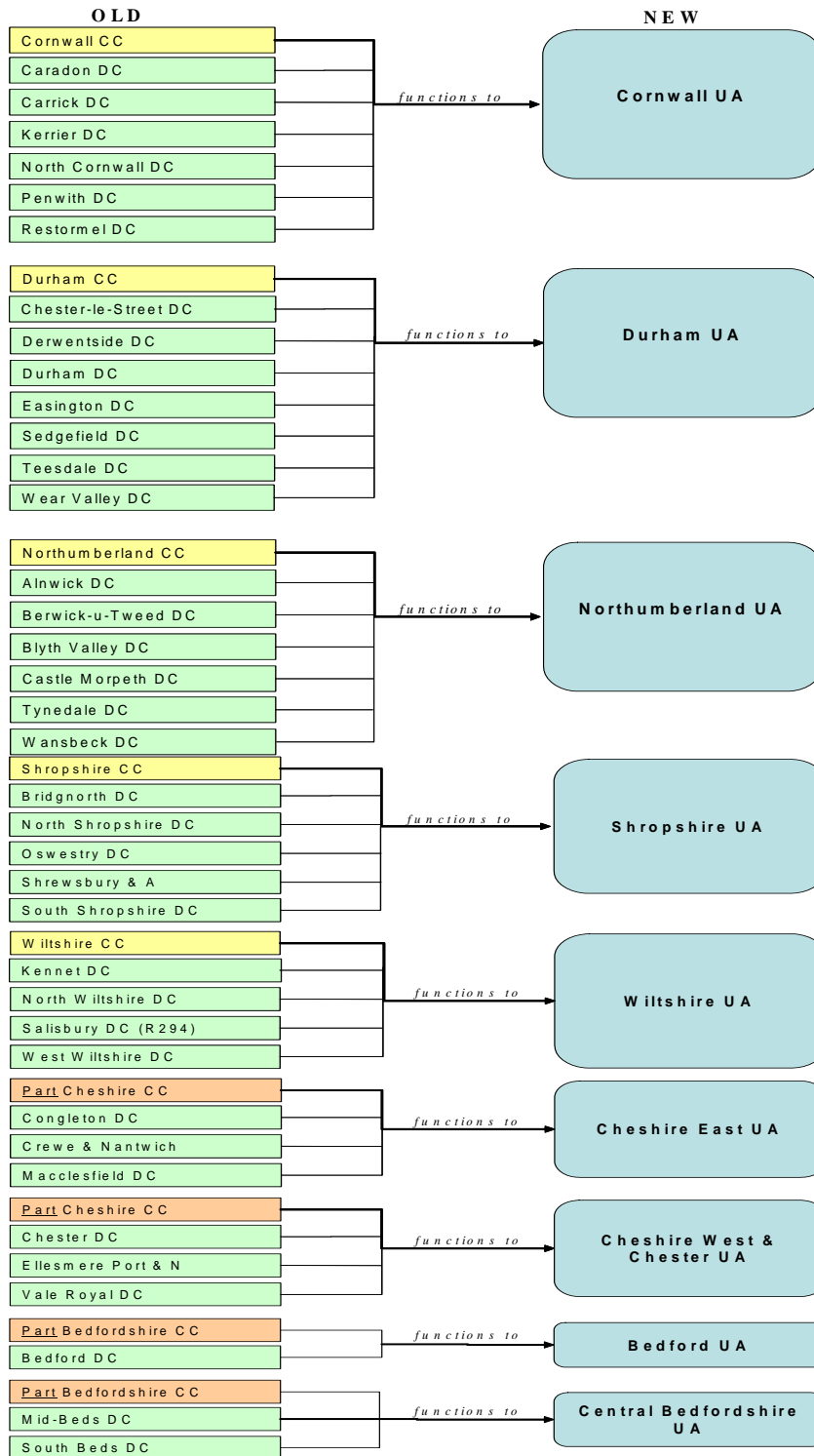
The list on the last page of this information sheet shows the responsibilities that each type of local authority has.

### Local government change

In 2006 the Local Government White Paper, 'Strong and Prosperous Communities' invited councils in two-tier areas to apply for unitary status. On the 1 April 2009 nine new unitary authorities were created with a further three authorities, Devon, Suffolk and Norfolk being subject to structural reviews by the Boundary Commission.

In February 2010 the Government announced the creation of a unitary structure for Exeter and Norwich, which if approved by Parliament will be created on 1 April 2011. No decision was made with regards to Suffolk although Government is now asking Suffolk councils to reach a consensus on which unitary solution they want through a countywide constitutional convention.

**On the 1 April 2009 the following changes took place:**



## Local authority responsibility for major services

	Metropolitan areas		Shire areas				London areas		
	District councils	Single purpose authorities	Unitaries	County councils	District councils	Single purpose authorities	London boroughs	GLA	Single purpose authorities
Education	✓		✓	✓			✓		
Highways	✓		✓	✓			✓	✓	
Transport planning	✓		✓	✓			✓	✓	
Passenger transport		✓	✓	✓				✓	
Social care	✓		✓	✓			✓		
Housing	✓		✓		✓		✓		
Libraries	✓		✓	✓			✓		
Leisure and recreation	✓		✓		✓		✓		
Environmental health	✓		✓		✓		✓		
Waste collection	✓		✓		✓		✓		
Waste disposal		✓	✓	✓			✓		✓
Planning applications	✓		✓		✓		✓		
Strategic planning	✓		✓	✓			✓	✓	
Police		✓				✓		✓	
Fire and rescue		✓	✓*	✓		✓		✓	
Local taxation	✓		✓		✓		✓		

**LGA, Analysis and Research**  
**February 2010**