

English Parish Councils

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Oporto

AEDRL

ULP

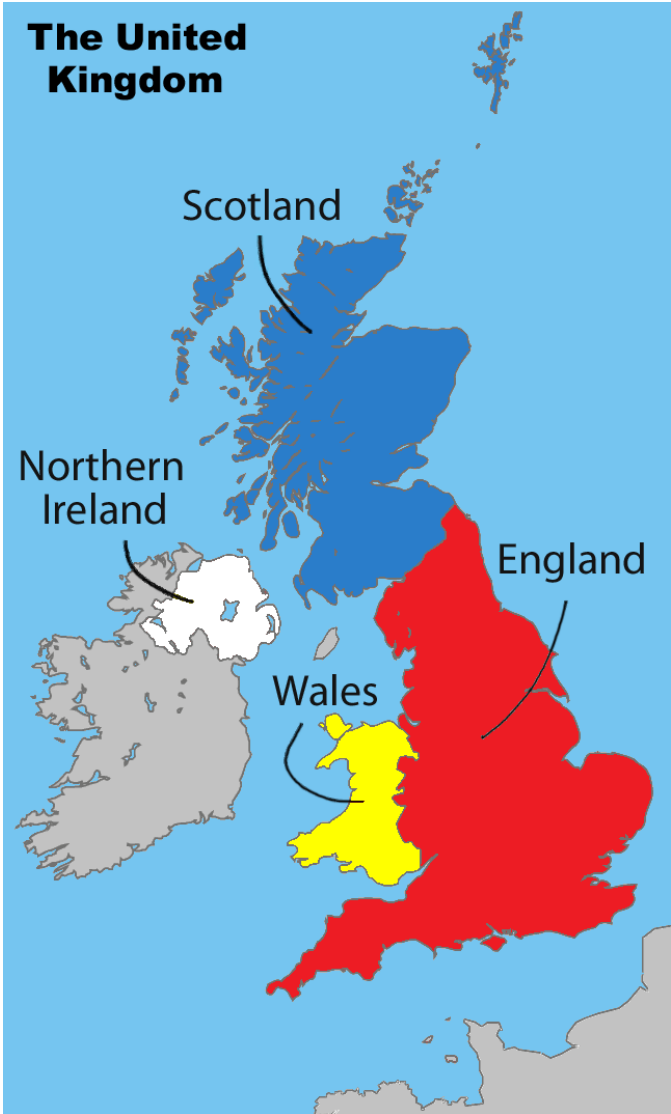


SALC

- 43 independent local associations
- A national body (NALC)
- NALC 20 staff
- SALC 7 staff + 2 support teams
- BALC 0.5 staff
- Advice, training, information, promotion
- Not-for-profit membership organisations



The United Kingdom



England

- England is different from the rest of the UK
- Not Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales
- Similar to Wales



History (17th Century)

- Life was simple and local for most rural people
- Community-level bodies (vestries) had important functions – health and housing
- Urban areas had ‘select vestries’ which were less popular



History (Upheaval)

- Life became difficult (post-Industrial Revolution and Napoleonic Wars)
- Central government and organisations took on more functions – burials and schools
- Local power was complex (14,926 civil parishes and 13,780 church parishes)
- There was a move against local landowner and church power



History (1894+)

- Local Government Act 1894
- Local councils as local authorities (first time)
- Power from the church to elected people
- Created local councils and parish meetings
- Powers increased slowly



History (WW2+)

- Political consensus
- Mixed views on local government structure
- (Scotland abolished local councils in 1929)
- Association for local councils (1947)
- Powers grew a little e.g. bus shelters (LG (MP) Act 1953)
- Royal Commission on Local Government (1969) followed a more continental model (freedom to act for local people)



History (1972+)

- Local Government Act 1972
- Reduced the number of principal authorities
- In rural areas – local councils remained
- In urban areas some changes - to local councils/to urban borough or district councils
- All parish areas have parish meetings
- 1990s and 2009 some county and district merger to make unitary councils.



Local Government

Two tiers of principal authorities

County (27)

+

District (201)

One tier principal authorities

London
Boroughs (32)

City of London
(1)

Unitary(55)

Council of
Isles of Scilly
(1)

Metropolitan
Boroughs (36)

**Local
councils
(9000)**



Overview

- About 10,000 local councils
- (About 9,000 tax)
- 40% population (25% = 16m)
- 80,000 councilors
- >25,000 staff (most only one part-time)
- Tax doubled over a decade



Tax

2015-16

- 8810
- £54.12
- 3.3%
- £409m

2016-17

- 8817
- £57.40
- 6.1%
- £445m

2017-18

- 8839
- £61.03
- 6.3%
- £485m



Powers and Duties

- Many powers
- Few duties
- Unlimited demand for tax
- Unlimited expenditure (on specific powers)
- Top-up powers (General Power of Competence and capped s.137)
- Different sizes, activity levels, populations, staff, assets and tax



Recent developments

- Economic and social pressures
- Reduce state dependency – increase local self-reliance
- Technology
- Reduced funding – services and assets unaffordable
- Devolution and ‘divestment’
- Localism Act 2011 - New community powers
- Principal council mergers – more remote
- Precept referendums threatened
- Anti-local government (and officer) culture
- 200 new local councils in a decade (more urban)
- Participatory budgeting and people power



New councils

- Many small councils in Suffolk/Norfolk/country
- My parish has 500 households and a precept of > 14,000
- Some new councils in urban areas
- 1 London - first council meeting in 2012



New council (1)

- **Affpuddle & Turnerspuddle Parish Council 2010**
- Population together < 450
- £9450
- Community voice
- Village signs
- Newsletters and local information
- Buy old telephone kiosk
- Grass cutting
- Encourage local active citizenship



New Council (2)

- **Oulton Broad Parish Council 2017**
- Voters 8,200
- £176,720
- 1 officer 3 days and 12 councillors
- Community voice
- Park
- Museum
- Play areas
- Yacht club
- Raise money locally
- Encourage local active citizenship
- Improve tourism
- Lease property for business and residential



New Council (3)

- **Lowestoft Town Council 2017**
- Voters 36,000
- £1,392,280
- 5 officers and 20 councillors
- Community voice
- Parks and play areas
- Many museums
- Priceless porcelain collection
- Sea defences
- CCTV
- Theatre
- Raise money locally
- Encourage local active citizenship
- Improve the area for future generations
- Lease property for business and residential (restaurants, homes etc)

