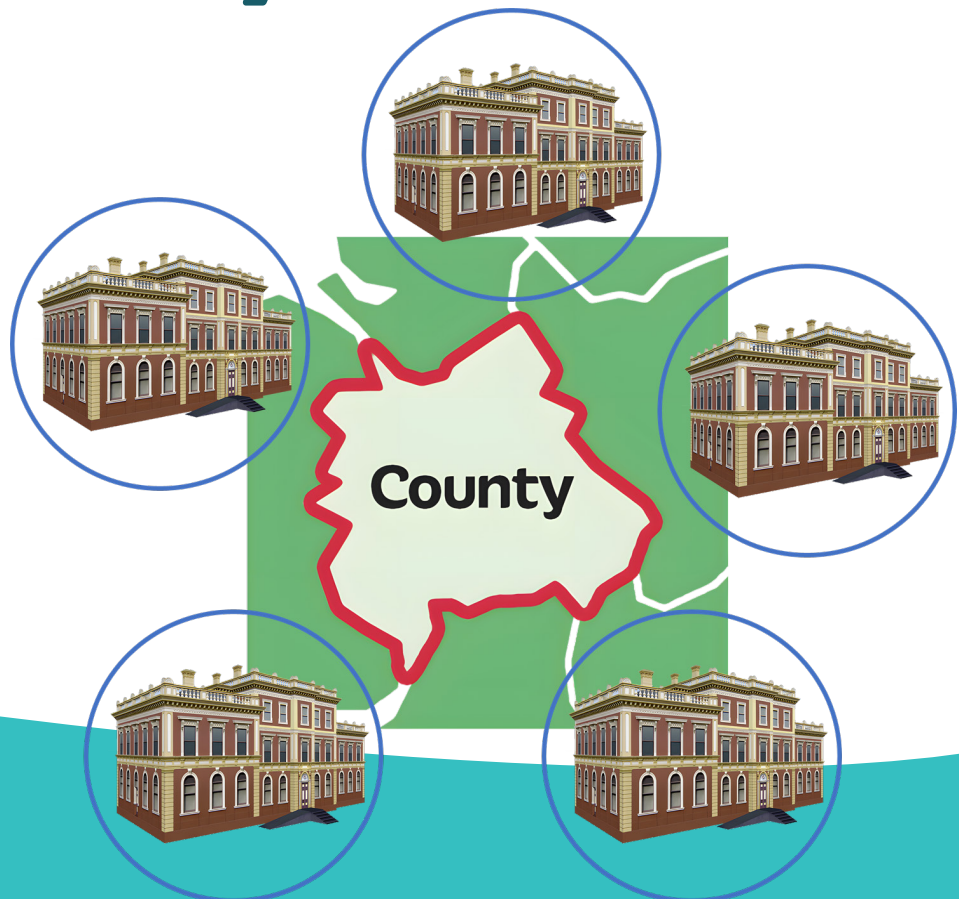


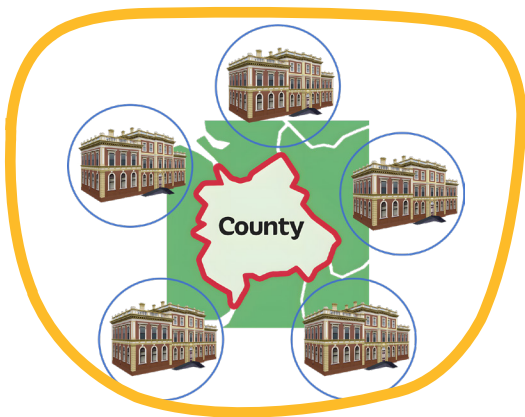
My Vote 
My Voice

What is a Combined Authority?





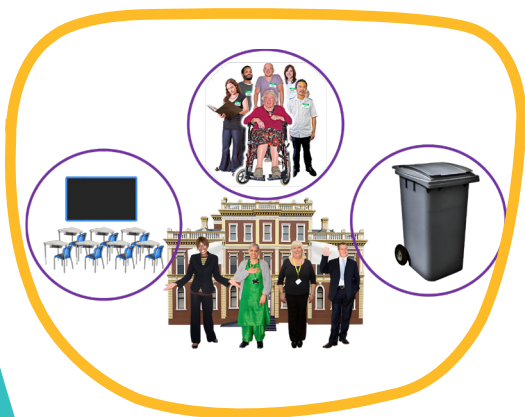
Local Councils are in charge of important services in your area and make sure things run smoothly where you live.



A **combined authority** is a group of local councils working together in an area.



The local councils join up to make decisions together on big issues like transport, housing and jobs.



Combined authorities **don't replace local councils.**

Your local council still runs services like social care, rubbish bin collection, and schools.

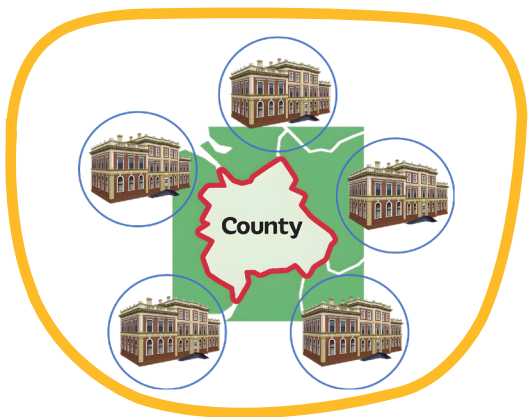


Local councils send councillors to be part of the combined authority.

These councillors help make decisions along with the **mayor**.



The mayor is the person who leads the councillors and the combined authority.

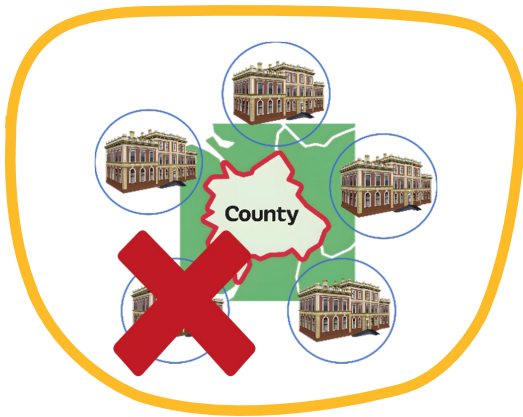


Why do some areas have a combined authority?

Councils choose to form a combined authority if they want to work together.



The UK Government must agree before it is set up.



Not all areas have a combined authority. Only places where councils have agreed to work together and it meets the government rules.



How are decisions made in a combined authority?

A combined authority **mayor** is elected by the public to lead the combined authority.



The mayor does not work alone. The mayor works with councillors from the local councils that are part of the combined authority.



Decisions must be agreed on by councillors and the mayor.



The mayor and combined authority follow national laws and cannot change them.



What mayors can and cannot do

Combined authority mayors can make decisions on big local issues, including:



Accessibility

Improving public transport and public spaces for disabled people.



Transport

New bus routes, train stations, cycling routes, and road improvements.



Housing

Building new homes and make sure housing is affordable.



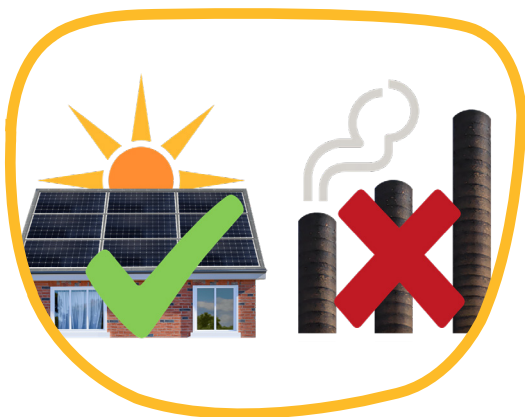
Jobs and skills

Bringing businesses to the area and paying for job training.



Public services

Supporting projects that help health and social care.



Climate and environment

Supporting green energy and reducing pollution.



What mayors can't do

Make national laws.



Control the NHS or local councils



Change benefits like
Universal Credit. Universal Credit is a payment some people can get to help with living costs.



Make decisions without working with councils in their area.



Where do combined authorities get their money from?

Combined authorities get money from the UK Government for transport, housing, and other projects.



Some of this money comes from taxes like business rates and council **tax**.

Taxes are the money people must pay to the government to provide services that everyone uses.



Combined authorities can also ask for extra money from the government for special projects.



The mayor and councillors have to make difficult decisions about how to spend this money on services and improvements.



How to contact your mayor or combined authority?

You can contact the mayor's office by

- Phone
- Email
- Writing a letter



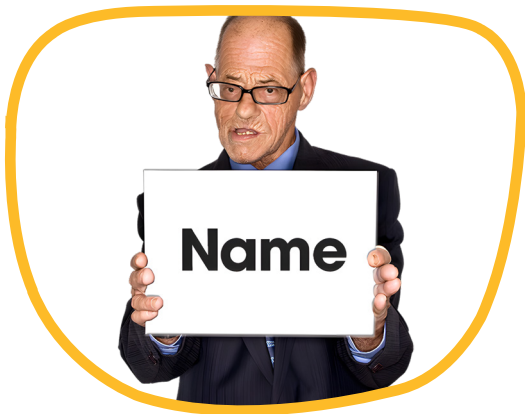
Some mayors hold **public meetings** where anyone can go and you can ask questions.



Your **local councillor** can also help raise issues you care about with the mayor.



Each combined authority has a website. Visit the combined authority website to find their contact details.



You can use this space to write down the contact details of your combined authority:

Name of your mayor:



Email:



Their address:



Phone number:



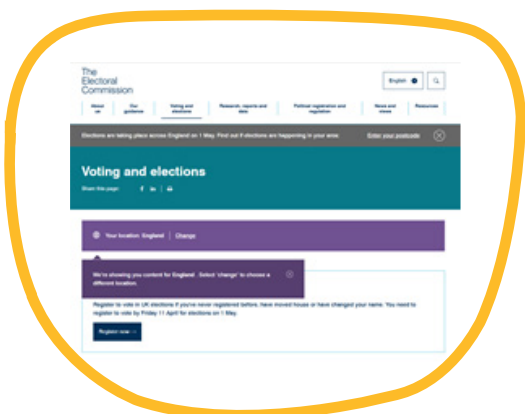
Your voice matters!



You can vote in **mayoral elections** to help choose who leads your region.



Mayors are normally elected every 4 years.



In the run up to elections, you can enter your postcode on The Electoral Commission website to find out more:

www.electoralcommission.org.uk/voter



This will tell you:
Who the candidates in your
area are



Where your polling station is



Who to contact if you need help



If you need help ask a friend,
support worker, or a family
member to help you find more
information.



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

**[https://www.myvotemyvoice.
org.uk/voting-resources/](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
to find out more.**

Get in touch:

info@myvotemyvoice.org.uk

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