

No.636 June 2019

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# first

the magazine for local government

## Be a Councillor

“The equal participation of women and men in local politics **is an important condition for effective democracy**”

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Local Government Association



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Multi-party politics is back



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**Compassionate councils**  
Supporting and protecting residents

# LGA

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## Election results



Congratulations to those of you who were newly or re-elected in May's local elections, and commiserations if you were unsuccessful.

Being a councillor is a tough but rewarding job, and I want to thank everyone for their hard work on behalf of our local communities.

You can find out more about the 2 May results in this month's lead feature from our elections experts Professors Colin Rallings and Michael Thrasher (p12).

The leader of Somerset County Council discusses why his local authority decided to work with Panorama on two hard-hitting programmes on adult social care (p15). We also have stories on the Government's waste strategy consultations (p14), the LGAs 'Be a Councillor' campaign (p16), and workforce equalities (p18).

Our lead comment is from the Joseph Rowntree Foundation (p21), and we also hear from Elmbridge Borough Council on injecting compassion into local services (p25).

The LGA's recent Smith Square Debate featured Chief Secretary to the Treasury Liz Truss MP, who said children with special educational needs will be a "real priority" in the 2019 Spending Review (p30).

And don't forget to book your place at the LGA's annual conference in Bournemouth (2-4 July), at [www.local.gov.uk/conference](http://www.local.gov.uk/conference)

Lord Porter is Chairman of the LGA

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## 'Extend prosecutions fund for underage knife sales'

**Six out of 10 retailers in some areas are breaking the law on underage knife sales, as funding to prosecute rogue sellers runs dry, the LGA has warned.**

It said 41 per cent of UK-based online knife retailers made illegal sales to under-18s in a test purchase operation, while shop staff are selling knives to children as young as 14.

The LGA has warned that the dedicated Home Office Prosecutions Fund – part of the Serious Violence Strategy – will not give enough help to trading standards teams to enforce breaches of knife sales in the longer term.

Councils' trading standards teams are also concerned they do not have the necessary resources to enforce new responsibilities under the Offensive Weapons Bill, aimed at tackling a surge in violent crime by targeting acid and knife sales. The bill is set to become law later this year.

With trading standards budgets and staffing having been cut by around half since 2010, as a result of cuts to council funding, the LGA is calling for more cash to be allocated to the Prosecutions Fund to support enforcement activity in 2019/20 and for the fund to be

extended beyond 2020 as part of the 2019 Spending Review.

The Government also needs to fund the extra enforcement activity needed in light of the Offensive Weapons Bill coming into force.

Cllr Simon Blackburn, Chair of the LGA's Safer and Stronger Communities Board, said: "The Prosecutions Fund announced in the Serious Violence Strategy has helped some councils prosecute retailers for blatant breaches of knife sale laws.

"However, given the knife crime epidemic, the significant cuts to trading standards budgets and the extra enforcement activity that will be needed when the Offensive Weapons Bill becomes law, this fund needs urgent further investment and extending to many more councils to tackle illegal knife sales and protect people from harm."

Meanwhile, a report by the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Knife Crime claims areas suffering the largest cuts to spending on young people have seen bigger increases in knife crime. Council-run youth services have seen funding more than halved in real terms since 2010.

## LGA letter calls for apprenticeships shake-up

The LGA has called for an extension to the date by which apprenticeship levy funding should be spent, and for a shake-up of the programme to help boost the number of apprenticeships.

From May, unspent levy allocations in employers' accounts – including councils' – started being withdrawn and redirected nationally to the Education and Skills Funding Agency's non-levy apprenticeship pot.

In a letter to Education Secretary Damian Hinds, LGA Chairman Lord Porter emphasised that many councils want to use their levy funds to boost vital skills and professions – but have been unable to do so within the last two years.

This is because standards for new apprenticeships, in areas such as social work and planning, have only just been approved, while others – such as for adult care, early years, and building control – are still in development.

"Employers support the Government's commitment to create more apprenticeships, as skills development is so vital for individuals, employers and the national and local economy," wrote Lord Porter.

"Unfortunately, they continue to face considerable barriers to spending their levy funds, despite their best efforts and recent welcome changes."

The letter, co-signed by business experts, industry leaders and combined authorities, also called for changes to the apprenticeship programme aimed at boosting the number of apprentices to help drive local economic growth, and at supporting disadvantaged communities.

Proposals include aligning apprenticeship activity in an area to local skills strategies and emerging local industrial strategies and sector deals; and flexibility for employers to work with local partners to decide how they spend their levy and any unspent levy funds to meet local economic priorities.

The influential Commons' Public Accounts Committee has also raised concerns about the apprenticeships programme, including how it will address the UK's poor productivity levels; meet the needs of people with lower skills and from disadvantaged communities and under-represented groups; and support small employers.

● See [www.local.gov.uk/open-letter-apprenticeship-levy](http://www.local.gov.uk/open-letter-apprenticeship-levy) for a copy of Lord Porter's letter



# Council schools more likely to keep 'good' grade

**A new report commissioned by the LGA has shown schools that remain with their council are more likely to keep a 'good' or 'outstanding' Ofsted rating than those that become an academy.**

The report, published by Angel Solutions, looks at how primary and secondary schools' Ofsted inspection grades have fared over the past five years, comparing those that remained council-maintained with those that became academies. Nine out of 10 schools remaining council-maintained have kept their good or outstanding rating, compared with 81 per cent of academy conversions.

The report also found that schools rated as 'requires improvement' or 'inadequate' were more likely to become 'good' or 'outstanding' if they remained with their local authority and did not convert to an academy (88 per cent compared with 59 per cent).

As part of its #CouncilsCan campaign, the LGA is calling for councils to be allowed to intervene and improve all types of school

found to be 'inadequate' – regardless of whether it is a maintained school or academy.

Under current rules, councils are stopped from helping, even in cases where a failing school cannot find an academy sponsor.

Maintained schools with 'inadequate' Ofsted judgements, which are considered to be failing, now have to become sponsor-led academies.

Cllr Anntoinette Bramble, Chair of the LGA's Children and Young People Board, said: "These findings clearly show that staying under council control delivers better results for a school than those that convert to an academy.

"Not only do more schools keep a good or outstanding rating if they remain maintained, but a significantly greater proportion are being turned around from struggling or failing into highly performing and successful schools. While academisation might be the answer for some, it is not always the best solution. Councils have an excellent track record in improving schools, and need to be given the necessary powers to intervene and support schools."

## Smith Square history

A book commemorating the opening of Transport House – what is now the LGA's Smith Square headquarters – has been presented to the LGA by Baroness Prosser.

The building was opened on 15 May 1928 by Ramsay MacDonald MP, Labour's first Prime Minister, and was originally the home of the Transport and General Workers' Union.

Baroness Prosser became active in the Labour party and the trade union movement in the early 1970s, rising through the ranks of the T&G to become Deputy General Secretary in 1998, and worked at Transport House.

She was given the book by a friend of a neighbour who worked for the property company employed by the T&G to oversee the building. It describes the history of the T&G, and includes plans and photographs of the original building.

Baroness Prosser presented the book to LGA Senior Vice-Chair Cllr Nick Forbes and LGA Chairman Lord Porter (all pictured below). She was taken on a tour of the building, which was refurbished in 2017. She said she "wouldn't have recognised" it from her days, when it was "all corridors and individual offices and secretaries guarding each one".



M24INSTUDIO PHOTOGRAPHY

## news in brief

### ASB 'played down or ignored', says report

Anti-social behaviour is being played down or ignored by councils, the police and housing providers, leaving victims to "suffer in silence", according to a report by the Victims' Commissioner for England and Wales.

Baroness Newlove has called for those repeatedly affected by anti-social behaviour to be given the same entitlement to support as other crime victims.

The LGA defended councils, saying: "Councils know people look to them to tackle the anti-social behaviour that can make a law-abiding resident's life hell or blight an entire neighbourhood. It's a role they take extremely seriously but one which is being made increasingly challenging as a result of losing 60p out of every £1 they had from government to spend on services in the past decade."

### Child exploitation

Children in England at risk of being exploited will be given extra support, including access to experts across education, health, social care, police and the voluntary sector, as part of a £2 million government scheme.

The Tackling Child Exploitation Support Programme aims to support children who could fall victim to threats such as gangs, county lines drug dealing, online grooming, sexual exploitation, trafficking or modern slavery.

Cllr Simon Blackburn, Chair of the LGA's Safer and Stronger Communities Board, said: "This programme will help councils who are working hard with their partners to identify and protect children and young people at risk of abuse amid ongoing funding cuts and soaring demand for urgent child protection work."

### Political balance

Following the 2 May local elections, the LGA's political balance has changed, with the Conservatives now on 38.8 per cent (was 43.4 per cent), Labour on 38 per cent (38.8 per cent), the Liberal Democrats on 12.4 per cent (9.7 per cent) and Independents on 10.7 per cent (8.1 per cent). The change to the political balance will impact on the LGA's governance structures when the various political appointments are refreshed over the summer.

● See p12.

## 'Tougher sentences for fly-tippers'

Councils are calling for tougher sentences to be handed to criminals who dump waste amid an almost 40 per cent rise in fly-tipping incidents since 2012.

LGA analysis reveals that no-one convicted of fly-tipping since the Government introduced new guidelines in 2014 has been given the maximum £50,000 fine or 12 months in prison by the courts.

This is despite fly-tipping incidents rocketing by 39.6 per cent since 2012 to just under one million incidents in 2017/18.

Councils are working hard to reduce fly-tipping and take enforcement action against offenders, including handing fixed penalty notices for smaller instances of fly-tipping.

However, since 2010 councils will have lost almost 60p out of every £1 the Government had provided for services. Demand on councils' legal duties means less money is available for discretionary powers – like issuing penalty notices for fly-tipping.

These funding pressures mean council enforcement cannot keep up with spiralling cases of fly-tipping. Councils took action on 494,034 incidents in 2017/18 – up by nearly 70,000 in five years.

The LGA is calling for the Government to review guidance to the courts to ensure the worst offenders face tougher sentences. With councils in England facing an overall funding gap of £8 billion by 2025, the Spending Review needs to ensure councils have the funding needed to investigate and prosecute fly-tippers.

Cllr Martin Tett, the LGA's Environment Spokesman, said: "Fly-tipping is unsightly, unacceptable and inexcusable environmental vandalism.

"Councils are doing everything they can to try to deter fly-tippers. However, prosecuting them often requires time-consuming and laborious investigations, with a high threshold of proof, at a time when councils face significant budget pressures.

"Consistent and hard-hitting prosecutions are needed to deter rogue operators and fly-tippers. Councils also need adequate funding to investigate incidents and ensure fly-tippers do not go unpunished."



## More funding for asylum children

**The Home Office has announced it will make more funding available for councils to support unaccompanied children seeking asylum, following lobbying by the LGA.**

Councils will receive £114 for each young refugee every day they are in their care, which amounts to around £41,600 per year per child. Rates are currently paid at £71, £91 and £95 a day.

The Home Office says this increase in funding will total more than £30 million per year.

Councils spent more than £152 million on unaccompanied asylum-seeking children in 2017/18 – an increase of 95 per cent on the £77 million spent in 2014/15.

The number of asylum-seeking children and young people in care in England rose from 2,760 in 2014/15 to 4,480 in 2017/18. Councils have also seen an increase of more than 50 per cent in two years in unaccompanied children leaving care when they turn 18 but remaining their responsibility (up from 4,660 to 7,130).

Cllr David Simmonds, Chairman of the LGA's Asylum, Migration and Refugee Task Group, said: "We are pleased that the Government has listened to councils by announcing new funding to help tackle some of this rising cost pressure and to help meet joint commitments to support children starting a new life in the UK.

"With the vast majority of refugee children aged 16 or 17, this change in funding needs to be followed through so that care leaving costs, which are equal to or greater than those of non-refugee children, are fully funded, as this remains the main barrier to councils taking on responsibility for ever-growing numbers.

"Councils are already under massive financial pressure supporting children in care, with children's services in England facing a £3.1 billion funding gap by 2025. It is vital the Government uses the Spending Review both to plug this gap and to fully fund councils' support of unaccompanied children, young people and families."



## New duty to house abuse victims

Victims of domestic abuse will be better protected by a new legal duty for councils to provide secure homes for them and their children.

Prime Minister Theresa May said the move, backed by funding, will help end the "postcode lottery" across the country and bolster protection for those seeking help. The duty will be included in the Domestic Abuse Bill, currently being considered by MPs.

Cllr Simon Blackburn, Chair of the LGA's Safer and Stronger Communities Board, said: "Tackling domestic abuse is an issue that councils take very seriously and they already offer a range of support to protect victims and their families from this horrendous crime. These additional measures will assist councils in this vital work.

"Councils cannot tackle this crime on their own. It requires a range of public services,

including the police, to work together. It will be important that the final package ensures local authorities are supported in their work going forward, and provides flexibility so services can be tailored to the needs of different areas.

"However, our ambition must be to reduce the number of victims, with greater investment in early intervention and prevention schemes that help stop domestic abuse occurring in the first place.

"Therefore, the Government's announcement that funding will be provided to place these vital services on a long-term, sustainable footing is a positive step. We look forward to working with government and our member councils during the consultation to ensure there are adequate resources and funding in place in the areas that need it."



## Cash for cladding on private buildings

**The Government has announced that around £200 million will be made available to remove and replace unsafe cladding from around 170 privately owned, high-rise buildings.**

Communities Secretary James Brokenshire praised private building owners that have been swift to act on Grenfell-style cladding, but accused others of being “reckless” for delaying and trying to pass the costs on to residents.

The latest figures show that works have yet to start on 156 private buildings, compared with 23 in the social housing sector.

Lord Porter, LGA Chairman, said: “This announcement will come as an enormous relief to leaseholders who are in no way to blame for the dangerous cladding on their homes. They have suffered for far too long.

“Since the LGA first raised their plight, we have been working with the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government to ensure the Treasury provided the necessary funding, and it is great that we have been listened to.

“Reputable developers have done the right thing and paid for buildings to be fixed, but it would be wrong if the taxpayer had to pay the bills of those developers and contractors who are responsible for this crisis.

“It is therefore right that, while the Government has committed to cover the cost temporarily, it has also said it will do everything in its power to ensure those responsible for the installation of unsafe cladding and insulation on their buildings, or indeed their insurers, eventually pay the full cost for its removal and replacement.”

## Funding for discounted homes

A pilot project providing £8.5 million to help deliver thousands of ‘discounted’ homes for younger people and families has been launched by Housing Minister Kit Malthouse.

Discounted homes are properties built for people to buy at affordable rates, allowing them to secure mortgages in areas of the country where they are currently locked out of the market by high prices. For example, a three-bed home from the Cornwall Community Land Trust recently sold for £160,000, compared with an average property price in the county of more than £230,000.

Volunteer groups will be able to apply for between £10,000 and £50,000 to help identify suitable sites for discounted homes, get planning permission for them and to provide other technical support.

Cllr Martin Tett, the LGA’s Housing

Spokesman, said the announcement was a positive step, adding: “It is important that local community groups receive encouragement and support to ensure they work with councils so that the right people get the right support.

“However, in order to tackle the national housing shortage, councils also need to be empowered to build more affordable, good-quality homes at scale, and fast.

“By recently lifting the borrowing cap on councils to invest in new and existing housing, the Government showed it had heard our argument that councils must be part of the solution to the housing crisis. In order to resume their historic role as major builders of affordable homes, councils now also need to be able to keep 100 per cent of Right to Buy receipts to ensure they can replace any homes sold.”

## news in brief

### Homelessness cuts

A report from homelessness charity St Mungo’s has found that councils are spending almost £1 billion less each year on homelessness compared with a decade ago.

It warned that cuts are leaving increasing numbers of people at risk on the streets. Cllr Martin Tett, the LGA’s Housing Spokesman, said: “Councils want to end homelessness by preventing it happening in the first place, but are currently housing more than 200,000 homeless people in temporary accommodation.

“Councils spent nearly £1 billion supporting families into temporary accommodation in 2017/18 alone.

“This is bad for families and unsustainable for councils, which, as a result, have less funding to invest in preventing homelessness for everyone.”

### Foster families

More than 8,500 foster families will be needed across the UK over the next year, according to new figures from the Fostering Network.

Cllr Anntoinette Bramble, Chair of the LGA’s Children and Young People Board, said: “Foster carers do an amazing job looking after vulnerable children and councils cannot keep children safe without them.

“It is no exaggeration to say that their contribution to improving the lives of some of society’s most vulnerable children is often heroic, changing the lives of children across the country every day.

“With 88 children entering care daily, it’s vital that we have the right foster carers to keep them safe, happy and well.”

### Celebrate 100 years of social housing

This year marks the centenary of the Housing Act 1919 – known as the Addison Act, after its author, Dr Christopher Addison, the then Health Minister – which introduced council and social housing.

The LGA is looking for case studies of the impact social housing has had in your area, and what you are doing locally to celebrate the centenary of the Act.

Please contact Ben Murray (email [ben.murray@local.gov.uk](mailto:ben.murray@local.gov.uk)) with any information.

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The National Autistic Society is a charity registered in England and Wales (269425) and in Scotland (SC039427)







## Children's services 'in crisis' warn MPs

**MPs have warned that children's services are at breaking point, and have backed the LGA's call for a funding gap of £3.1 billion to be plugged by 2025.**

Ahead of this year's Spending Review, a report by the Housing, Communities and Local Government Select Committee calls for a funding settlement that reflects the challenges local authorities face in delivering children's social care.

The committee says that more work needs to be undertaken to understand and address the factors driving ever-increasing demand for children's services, and that increased funding "must go hand in hand with systemic change" if local authority children's services are to be sustainable in the long term.

Cllr Annetonette Bramble, Chair of the LGA's Children and Young People Board, said: "It is great that the committee has backed the LGA's call for new funding and recognises our estimate of the £3.1 billion funding gap councils face by 2025.

"These are absolutely vital council services in desperate need of significant and sustained

long-term investment, which keep children and young people safe from harm and the worst abuses of society.

"However, as the LGA and the sector have long warned, children's services are at a tipping point as a result of increasingly high levels of demand for support and cuts in central government funding."

Committee Chair Clive Betts MP said: "Over the last decade, we have seen a steady increase in the number of children needing support, while at the same time funding has failed to keep up.

"It is clear that this approach cannot be sustained, and the Government must make serious financial and systemic changes to support local authorities in helping vulnerable children. They must understand why demand is increasing and whether it can be reduced. They must ensure that the funding formula actually allows local authorities to meet the obligations for supporting children that the Government places on them.

"We have reached a crisis point and action is needed now."

## Bus service funding 'needs reform'

Funding of bus services in England is uncertain and needs reform, according to a report by the Commons' Transport Select Committee.

The committee has urged the Government to produce a bus strategy to halt the decline in bus use and give passengers a fairer deal. Its report states that in most parts of England bus use is falling, with more than 3,000 bus routes in the country reduced, altered or withdrawn since 2010/11.

MPs said money from the Government for buses is often seen by councils and operators as "uncoordinated and fragmented".

Cllr Martin Tett, the LGA's Transport Spokesman, said: "Bus journeys are in a downward spiral of decline, which is driving up fares and exacerbating cuts to the services and routes that are a lifeline for many communities and vulnerable residents.

"The Transport Committee rightly calls for the funding of bus services to be reformed and it is good to see several recommendations to improve this. The recommendations also include a single bus strategy for England.

"Any strategy would have to be backed by adequate resources and find a fully funded, long-term solution to concessionary fares that are underfunded by at least £652 million a year. This is unsustainable for councils already struggling to protect other subsidised bus travel in rural areas, or helping young people with their travel costs.

"Ahead of the forthcoming Spending Review, government needs to give councils control over the Bus Service Operators' Grant, and properly fund national free bus pass schemes, if councils are to maintain our essential bus services, reduce congestion and pollution, and protect vital routes."

## Illegal used tyres 'put lives at risk'

Motorists could be putting their lives at risk buying dangerous second-hand tyres, with nearly half of used tyres in some areas being sold illegally, the LGA has warned.

Part-worn tyres are being sold with serious safety defects, unsafe repairs and incorrect labelling, with some used tyres on sale found to be nearly 30 years old.

The LGA is urging motorists buying second-hand tyres to check they are in good condition and bear the required 'part-worn' tyre marking. The stamp lets drivers know that the tyre has been checked and meets legal requirements.

Latest government figures show there

were 17 people killed and 719 road casualties – nearly two a day – in reported accidents in the UK in 2017 where illegal, defective or under-inflated tyres were a contributory factor.

Cllr Simon Blackburn, Chair of the LGA's Safer and Stronger Communities Board, said: "Dangerous part-worn tyres are putting motorists' lives at risk and blatant, inexcusable breaches of the law are happening with shocking prevalence in some areas.

"Motorists buying used tyres should go to a reputable trader and check they have 'part-worn' stamped on them, as without this mark they are unlikely to have been checked and the retailer is breaking the law."



# letters

## Representing the middle ground

What to any voter at the polling station at last month's local elections and they will tell you in no uncertain terms that they feel betrayed by politicians from the main political parties.

I lead the Morecambe Bay Independents, a group founded in the late 1980s to represent local residents. We had, at that time, invited local councillors to a meeting to find out what their future plans were for our home town. Not one councillor turned up, so we formed our own group and we have enjoyed a strong presence on the council ever since.

On 2 May, we fielded 20 candidates and won 14 seats (two seats above our best expectation).

The media has talked a lot about the impact of Brexit on the local elections – that's only part of the story. Politics has gone too far to the left and too far to the right, and the majority of people in the middle are being alienated.

Our group represents that non-combative middle ground that residents prefer. We are not tribal, we are happy to work with any political party that has at their heart the best interests of our home town and, unlike the mainstream parties, we would never ignore or ostracise a voter from the democratic process because of their political persuasion.

**Cllr Geoff Knight (Ind)**, Lancaster City Council

## Member pay and pensions

Cllr Bruce Baker is both brave and on point when he suggests a national pay mechanism for councillors to replace the current localised system (**first** 634).

Bands could be introduced based on baseline levels of responsibility. This would improve public transparency, put an end to opportunistic rhetoric about rises in allowances, and reduce the scope of council leaderships to bring about systems of patronage.

I would suggest that we go further. Allowances should aim at helping more younger members and those of working age to take key roles. This must include the reintroduction of the right to a liveable pension.

The absence of such a scheme means that members who are not of retirement age are forced towards pension poverty if they put themselves forward for major roles in cabinets or key committees – one could not imagine a more powerful disincentive for the young.

But who negotiates for us? Perhaps elected members need a trade union?

**Cllr Tom Miller (Lab)**, Cabinet Lead for Community Safety, Brent Council

## Brownfield housing

Well done to the Campaign to Protect Rural England (**first** 635) for its work on brownfield sites for new homes. Such registers 'sign post' that housing (and jobs) can be delivered without the need to damage our green spaces.

**Cllr Tony Devenish AM (Con)**, Westminster City Council and London Assembly Regeneration Chairman

## Paying for drainage

Our council in East Lincolnshire does actively engage with internal drainage boards as Cllr Derek Antrobus urges (**first** 632) – three at least here! But I have to ask if he thinks it is equitable that 58 per cent of the council tax the district raises here goes to the internal drainage boards, leaving



East Lindsey with just 42 per cent to spend on our services? We are sparsely populated, have a higher than national average number of people aged over 60, and we have areas of great deprivation. This does not leave much to help the vulnerable.

This is an anomaly of times gone by which needs urgently to be repealed. Government must listen!

**Cllr Jill Makinson-Sanders (Ind)**, East Lindsey District Council





## Work for special needs adults

Buckinghamshire Adult Learning is now offering supported internships to young adults with special educational needs to help them gain sustainable employment.

In partnership with a number of Buckinghamshire schools, the programme is aimed at young people aged 18 to 24 who have an education, health and care plan.

The current programme, which started in September 2018, is based at a hotel where the interns are given personalised learning goals and varied work experience opportunities.

Recruitment has now started for another five interns at the hotel and 10 interns to study on another programme to be run at Stoke Mandeville Hospital in Aylesbury from September 2019.

The interns will complete a BTEC Level 1 Work Skills programme, have the opportunity to study maths and English functional skills

## sound bites

### Cllr Seema Kumar (Con, Ealing)

"Good to speak and support new Incoming **#Mayor** of **#Ealing** Cllr Abdullah Gulaid. Great his chosen charity is **#Descendants** supporting children. Also gave **#Vote** of thanks to the Outgoing Mayor Cllr Dhami. Job well done supporting hard working charities in our Borough **@EalingTories**."

[www.twitter.com/SeemaStk](http://www.twitter.com/SeemaStk)

### Cllr Garry Bridges (Lab, Manchester)

"Spent the morning with social workers at North, Harpurhey District Office checking in. Some really positive feedback, particularly the support from team managers and impact of stronger partnership working on contacts."

[www.twitter.com/GarryBridges](http://www.twitter.com/GarryBridges)

### Cllr Tim Bick (Lib Dem, Cambridge)

"Delighted to see that contrary to **@camcitco** original plans for the Park Street redevelopment, that the existing public toilets will now be reprovided. Argued by stakeholders and residents on Monday and accepted by Thursday! **@Camsblive**!"

[www.twitter.com/CllrTimBick](http://www.twitter.com/CllrTimBick)

### Cllr Ellie Chowns (Ind, Herefordshire)

"Lovely to be in Shrewsbury last night at two packed events! First, the launch of the Shropshire **#GreenNewDeal** with fantastic Green Cllr **@JulianDean99** setting out a positive vision for the county's future."

[www.twitter.com/ellie\\_chowns](http://www.twitter.com/ellie_chowns)

### Cllr Nicola Richards (Con, Dudley)

"Thanks to **@JamesCleverly** for joining us in Dudley South tonight for our annual dinner, celebrating excellent results not just in Dudley South, or the wider Dudley Borough but the whole Black Country."

[www.twitter.com/NicolaFR](http://www.twitter.com/NicolaFR)

### Cllr Kevin Bonavia (Lab, Lewisham)

"Come and join the welcome for residents in Lewisham's new council homes in Blackheath Ward! Proud to see delivery of **@lewishamlabour's** plans to tackle the housing crisis **#LewishamForTheMany** **@PaulBell1971** **@damieneagan** **@AmandadeRyk** **@JulietOC22**."

[www.twitter.com/kevinbonavia](http://www.twitter.com/kevinbonavia)

at an appropriate level, receive ongoing special educational needs support and complete work experience in the workplace. The programme will be supported by on-site tutors and a full-time job coach during the year. The interns will also be supported in their first year of work by a job coach from charity Adviza.

We are delighted that our partnership scheme is offering opportunities to young people with special educational needs. It is important that we give our young people every opportunity to grow and develop the key skills to help them achieve fulfilling lives in the future.

**Cllr Mike Appleyard (Con)**, Cabinet Member for Education and Skills, Buckinghamshire County Council



**What do you think?** Please submit letters for publication by emailing [karen.thornton@local.gov.uk](mailto:karen.thornton@local.gov.uk). Letters may be edited and published online

# features

## Local election results 2019

Multi-party politics is back with a vengeance, with a leap in the number of Liberal Democrat, Green and Independent councillors

Seasoned local politicians and observers will have had a twinge of nostalgia as the 2 May local election results unfolded. For several years, local government has been increasingly dominated by the two big parties. Going into these contests, Labour and the Conservatives together controlled more than 80 per cent of all councils and councillors.

Now, however, multi-party politics is back with a vengeance after a leap in the number of Liberal Democrat, Green and Independent councillors – and, with that, a doubling of the number of ‘hung’ councils.

The 81 councils with no one party in overall control (NOC) is the most since 2009. The number of councillors from other than one of



Professors Colin Rallings (right) and Michael Thrasher are Associate Members, Nuffield College, Oxford



opposition. That mood was often reinforced locally, as unpopular councils found themselves similarly the victim of discontent and protest voting.

Indeed, Labour’s failure to take advantage of Conservative woes meant that the Conservatives

the three main parties (2,084) is the highest for nigh on two decades. The Liberal Democrats, coming from a low base and still far short of their historic highs of the 1990s, can claim their best advance in seats at a single election.

This turnaround was made possible by an electorate that, while rejecting the national governing party – as is common in mid-term local elections – saw little merit in the official

narrowly retained their position as the biggest political group at the LGA, and retain its chairmanship. If Labour had managed any kind of advance, it would have overturned the LGA’s political balance.

Brexit, or rather the failure of the Government and the House of Commons to ‘sort it out’, obviously played a part in this election, but the results varied so widely from place to place that it is far from the sole explanation. Even the Conservatives had some successes, gaining control in three authorities while losing more than one in four of all the council seats they were defending.

In Uttlesford, their trouncing owed much to local controversy over the expansion of London Stansted Airport, which the Residents for Uttlesford group has been opposing.

Planning and environmental issues were also to the fore in East Devon, which was taken by Independents for the first time since 1976. As recently as 2011, the Conservatives had 43 of the seats here; now they have 19 out of 60.

In Gravesham, the Conservative ruling group had split in two before the election and, although most of the newly Independent Conservatives were not on the ballot paper, Labour gratefully took advantage of the bad blood locally.

Nor was Labour immune to this tendency. In Ashfield, the success of the Independents is the culmination of a long period of making gradual inroads into Labour’s majority through



## Results summary 2019 England (compared with May 2018, including councils without elections, local by-elections, defections and structural/boundary changes)

	Seats	Councils
Conservative	-1,288	-47
Labour	-70	-8
Liberal Democrat	+701	+12
Other	+657	+4
No overall control	-	+39

## Councils controlled (England) 2019

Con	Lab	Lib Dem	Ind/Other	No overall control
142	90	23	5	81

## Councillors (England) 2019

Con	Lab	Lib Dem	Ind/Other
7,058	5,618	2,486	2,084

*“Brexit obviously played a part in this election, but the results varied so widely from place to place that it is far from the sole explanation”*

election victories and defections. The new leader of the council, Jason Zadrozny, was first elected as a Liberal Democrat in 2007, but left the party before the 2015 contests. It is interesting that the Lib Dems, for whom Zadrozny came within 192 votes of deposing Labour at the 2010 General Election, contested just a single ward in the entire district this time.

Across the border in Derbyshire, Labour gained Amber Valley directly from the Conservatives, but lost Bolsover for the first time since the council was created in 1973. And in the Tees Valley, Middlesbrough gave up 45 years of unbroken Labour rule after a surge by Independents, with Hartlepool, Redcar & Cleveland, and Stockton-on-Tees witnessing a similar phenomenon.

Some defeated councillors blamed Brexit; others Jeremy Corbyn. Many, however, accepted that internal disputes and a failure to connect with the electorate had taken their toll.

For the Liberal Democrats, too, there was a sense of ‘back to the future’. They, perhaps predictably, did well in affluent, Remain-voting areas such as Bath & North East Somerset, St Albans, Vale of White Horse and Winchester, where they hold the parliamentary constituency and/or have held the council in the past.

But they also bounced back in some of what used to be considered their more rural heartlands where Leave was in the ascendency. North Devon, North Norfolk and the newly created Somerset West and Taunton all went

Liberal Democrat for the first time in a decade or more.

One of the biggest shocks was in the Essex commuter territory of Chelmsford. A Liberal near-miss constituency as far back as 1983, the party had sunk into oblivion until jumping from five to 31 seats last week. The Lib Dems also gained Cotswold for the first time.

With memories of tuition fees and the Coalition Government fading, it appears that many voters again see the Liberal Democrats as an appropriate vehicle for protest, at least.

In terms of a proportional increase in councillors, it is the Greens who did best of all. Their tally nearly quadrupled, from 71 to 263, to firmly establish their place as the, albeit distant, fourth party in England.

In most places they picked up just a couple of seats, but local agreements with the Liberal Democrats in Folkestone & Hythe (the former Shepway) and Mendip, for example, brought greater reward. It is also interesting to note they recovered ground in councils such as Brighton & Hove and Norwich, where they had looked outflanked by Labour on the left since Corbyn became party leader. No longer, it seems.

With the media focused on the national implications of the results for Labour and the Conservatives – ‘drubbing’ seemed to be the *mot du jour* – the six mayoral contests struggled for other than local attention. There was drama here too, though.

In Middlesbrough, Independent Andy Preston, who had lost by 362 votes in 2015,

## Council control change May 2019

**Con gain from Lab:**  
North East Derbyshire.

**Con gain from NOC:**  
North East Lincolnshire; Walsall.

**Lab gain from Con:**  
Amber Valley; High Peak.

**Lab gain from NOC:**  
Calderdale; Gravesham; Trafford.

**Lib Dem gain from Con:**  
Bath and North East Somerset; Chelmsford; Cotswold; Hinckley & Bosworth; Mole Valley; Somerset West and Taunton; Teignbridge; Vale of White Horse; Winchester.

**Lib Dem gain from NOC:**  
North Devon; North Norfolk; South Somerset.

**Ind gain from Con:**  
East Devon; North Kesteven; Uttlesford.

**Ind gain from NOC:**  
Ashfield.

**Con lose to NOC:**  
Arun; Babergh; Basildon; Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole; Broxtowe; Cheshire East; Chichester; Craven; Eden; Folkestone & Hythe; Guildford; Herefordshire; Malvern Hills; Mendip; Mid Devon; Mid Suffolk; North Hertfordshire; North Somerset; Pendle; Peterborough; Richmondshire; Rother; South Oxfordshire; Southend-on-Sea; South Ribble; St Albans; Staffordshire Moorlands; Swale; Tandridge; Tendring; Torbay; Torridge; Warwick; Welwyn Hatfield; Woking; Wyre Forest.

**Lab lose to NOC:**  
Bolsover; Burnley; Cannock Chase; Cheshire West and Chester; Darlington; Hartlepool; Middlesbrough; Stockton-on-Tees; Wirral.

secured a landslide first-ballot victory, nearly 11,000 votes ahead of his Labour opponent in second place. In Mansfield, by contrast, Independent incumbent Kate Allsop, 1,000 behind Labour in the first count, failed by just two votes to catch Andy Abrahams when second ballots were taken into account.

In Leicester, Sir Peter Soulsby easily won election for a third time, with an even greater share of the vote. How his Labour colleagues (and, indeed, Conservative rivals) across the country would love to know the secret.

# Waste not...



## Councils want to increase recycling rates but changes to waste collections proposed by government must be fully funded

Following the publication last year of its 25 Year Environment Plan, the Government has been consulting on a series of proposals on waste and recycling that have significant implications for councils.

These include requiring councils to collect a core set of dry recyclable materials from households and businesses, and make separate food waste collections; making packaging producers pay for the full costs of recycling their waste; the introduction of a deposit return scheme for plastic bottles and tin cans; and a plastic packaging tax.

After consulting widely with member councils, councillors and officers, as well as stakeholders and service providers, the LGA has responded to these consultations on behalf of local government.

We have highlighted councils' success in increasing recycling rates, and support the ambition of increasing these further. The Government has committed to meeting councils' full net costs, which is welcome – but we aren't reassured that the current modelling will deliver true full net costs for all councils.

Any funding for local government needs to be treated as additional, and must go in its entirety to councils if higher quantity and quality recycling is to be achieved; an

improvement on current recycling levels needs a significant financial uplift.

We recognise the Government's desire to deliver greater consistency in the materials collected. Around 70 per cent of councils already collect the proposed set of materials, with the gaps being glass and plastic pots, tubs and trays. Councils need the funding to support the expansion of their services to cover new materials.

The Government wants to make separate food waste collections mandatory by 2023. This is supported, so long as councils' costs are fully funded and that equal attention is paid to prevention of food waste.

However, garden waste remains an area where councils should continue to be allowed to charge for collection.

Councils should also be free to decide how to deliver their waste services at a local level. There are a range of local issues, such as geography, property type, deprivation and rurality that determine the method in which waste can be collected.

The Government's preference for

multi-stream collections is not supported by councils. Meanwhile, there is support for a deposit return scheme for plastic bottles and cans, but the current proposals do not demonstrate value for money.

A deposit return scheme is a collection system. On its own, it doesn't make producers change their behaviour. It has to be implemented in a manner that actively encourages producers to use more environmentally friendly bottles. It must not be a system that facilitates producers carrying on with their current behaviour while consumers pick up the cost by paying deposits.

Finally, it is encouraging to see proposals for a plastic packaging tax that are designed to stimulate demand for used plastic packaging.

The ambition to increase plastic recycling needs everyone to play their part, from manufacturers and retailers to the recycling industry. The LGA has long called for a whole-chain approach to recycling and for responsibility to be shared across all the players.

Local government can only deliver on this ambition if the commitments on making packaging producers pay for recycling their products are fully followed through. Producers need to pay true full net costs to councils for the waste they create.



See [www.gov.uk/government/news/government-sets-out-plans-to-overhaul-waste-system](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-sets-out-plans-to-overhaul-waste-system) for the **Government's waste and recycling consultation documents**

The panel debate following the London preview screening of 'Crisis in Care'



**B**y the time you're reading this, the first episode of Panorama's 'Crisis in Care' will have been broadcast. I don't know exactly what ended up on screen, but having seen a rough cut, I've a good idea of what these two, hour-long films will look like.

Panorama spent 10 months in Somerset, following our social care teams and a dozen case studies of people moving through the care system. You'll see the inspirational work of our social workers, care providers and voluntary groups – sobering and humbling, it's a reminder of just how important local government is to the fabric of our communities.

You'll also see the struggles of people receiving care, the toll taken on families and carers, the difficult decisions that have to be made in a system for which funding hasn't kept pace with the demands of a rapidly ageing population or people's expectations.

This isn't a story about Somerset. Panorama could have blindly stuck a pin in a map and found the same kind of stories anywhere in the UK.

As a matter of urgency, this country needs a Green Paper setting out a route map for funding social care sustainably in the long term. What we've done is put our head above

## Crisis in care?

### Two Panorama programmes could force the funding of adult social care back onto the political and public agenda



**Councillor David Fothergill (Con)** is Leader of Somerset County Council

the parapet to help tell that story, because it's one that everyone needs to hear.

It would have been much easier not to get involved. When you agree to let Panorama in, you know you're going to get a harsh dose of reality and no editorial control. Those are the rules and this had to be something that my chief executive and I were signed-up to.

But if you're confident in what you do, you should be brave enough to tell your story to the widest possible audience. We've spent plenty of time talking about this in Somerset, writing letters, supporting the lobbying of the County Councils Network and others, but there comes a point when you have to go further.

The end result is two films that have the potential to force this issue back onto the political and public agenda.

Was the experience perfect? Of course not. Panorama came during a hugely pressurised and difficult budget-setting process when the media were desperately seeking the 'next Northamptonshire'.

Our financial position has improved significantly (albeit far too heavily reliant on one-off and uncertain funding, but that's another story), and we've topped up reserves – but that positive chapter came too late to be included in this story. That's frustrating, as is the lack of screen time for our trailblazing, community-led care approach that's having fantastic results and improving lives.

Am I delighted these films are called 'Crisis in Care'? No. Care isn't in crisis in Somerset. But a national crisis is coming and, by contributing to these films, I'm proud to be part of something that could make a difference.

I'm asked about potholes virtually every day, but I can count on the fingers of one hand the questions I've had about social care. This is a subject we need to be talking about, politically and publicly, and I hope we're talking about it a little more after these films.



As first went to press, Panorama's 'Crisis in Care' was scheduled to be broadcast on BBC1 at 9pm on Wednesday 29 May and Wednesday 5 June

*“A national crisis is coming and, by contributing to these films, I'm proud to be part of something that could make a difference”*

# Redressing the balance

The LGA's Be a Councillor campaign aims to increase the pool of talent from which councillors are elected – including women



**T**he equal participation of women and men in local politics, as our elected councillors and as our leaders, is an important condition for effective democracy and good governance. Representative councils are best able to speak to, and for, their communities and to support the effective business of local government.

Local government – of course – led the way on women's suffrage: in 1889, a handful of women stood in the elections for new county authorities, and before that women were accepted as candidates on parish, urban and rural district councils.

In 1907, new legislation enabled women ratepayers to become county and borough councillors, and mayors and chairmen of councils, with Elizabeth Garrett Anderson becoming the first woman mayor in England (in Aldeburgh in 1908), and Gwennllian Morgan the first Welsh woman mayor (Brecon, in 1910).

However, today, none of the combined authority mayors are female, and overall women councillors are still outnumbered two to one by men. They make up a fifth of political leaders, and a third of local authority chief executives – despite 76 per cent of employees in the local

government workforce being female.

The LGA's Be a Councillor campaign aims to increase the pool of talent from which councillors are elected – a key task for local government.

The campaign is based on the belief that local authorities – and political parties and groups – can do the best for their communities when they truly represent their place.

Local government can only be as effective and relevant as the people elected to run it. This means encouraging more diversity and harnessing the skills, experiences and knowledge of under-represented groups, including women – and including women from black and ethnic minorities, LGBTQ+, and of all ages.

So we have recently added new case studies of female councillors – and their tips and stories about being an elected representative – to our Be a Councillor website. Some are featured here (see right,

and [www.beacouncillor.co.uk/meet-her](http://www.beacouncillor.co.uk/meet-her)).

The LGA also recently published 'Twenty-first century councils', a toolkit designed to help councils create the underlying policies, procedures, ethos and environment that encourages and empowers women, parents and carers to stand as councillors and take on leadership roles in local authorities.

The toolkit is designed to support all types of council – district, county, unitary, metropolitan, combined – and to work with the level of resources, capacity and expertise you have available to make improvements.

You can download the resource at [www.local.gov.uk/twenty-first-century-councils](http://www.local.gov.uk/twenty-first-century-councils), or see **first** 634 for more.

Local government needs different kinds of people willing to stand for election so that parties get a choice of quality candidates: councillors who are capable, vibrant, energetic and engaged, with a commitment to local people and a passion for change.



**Be a Councillor resources** are available at [www.local.gov.uk/our-support/highlighting-political-leadership/be-councillor](http://www.local.gov.uk/our-support/highlighting-political-leadership/be-councillor) and [www.beacouncillor.co.uk](http://www.beacouncillor.co.uk). **We can also help you run a local version of Be a Councillor tailored to your particular area** – please contact [beacouncillor@local.gov.uk](mailto:beacouncillor@local.gov.uk) for more information.





*As a newly elected councillor, it is shocking to learn that there are nearly twice as many male councillors as female in this country. We all need to encourage women to stand and give them the support they need.*

*At a time when so many people are disillusioned with politics, it doesn't make sense that half the population are under-represented. Getting more women councillors could change the conversation in town halls around the country.*

*Becoming a councillor is a great opportunity for women. We all need to get out there and #AskHerToStand.*

**Councillor Geraldine Coggins (Green), Trafford Council**



*I became a councillor in 2003, when my youngest child was five. I took some persuading to put myself forward, the local party was encouraging, but barriers of self-belief and the time commitment concerned me.*

*Juggling three children, part-time work and being a councillor did take some organising. Initially, I was put on committees that met at school pick-up and drop-off times.*

*I made use of after-school clubs, claimed the expenses and requested other committees in future.*

*I love getting things done for residents. I love being involved in my local community. I'm less keen on the meetings where little is achieved except hot air, but I enjoy those committees where we make real change.*

*I would encourage more women of all ages to stand as councillors. Councils need to be representative and can only be so if people stand up. My daughter's now putting herself forward as a councillor. Voices of the young, of women and from all backgrounds, need to be there, having a say in running our councils.*

**Councillor Fay Howard (Lab), Swindon Borough Council**



*I was persuaded to stand as a councillor nine years ago, and have not looked back since. I saw it as a great opportunity to get stuff done for my community, to make life a little bit easier, better, and fairer.*

*Local government has its frustrations for sure, but I have found it rewarding as I bring my unique perspective as a BAME woman to the table, and use my engineering background to think creatively and find solutions to the challenges my communities face.*

*I encourage women to become councillors; it's about making our communities work as one big family.*

**Councillor Tumi Hawkins (Lib Dem), South Cambridgeshire District Council**



*I was a mum who lived a quiet life, had never engaged in politics and was not a well-known local character – who would vote for me anyway?*

*Eleven years later I am deputy leader of a county council enjoying my role and developing with the challenges it brings.*

*With persistence and drive, every woman has the opportunity to stand and make a difference in their community. It's often not the large, well-publicised events that impact the most, but it's the small actions that really can make a difference and have a long-lasting effect on yourself and those that you serve.*

**Councillor Mandy Chilcott (Con), Somerset County Council and West Somerset District Council**

# Workforce equality and diversity

The gender pay gap is relatively low in local government but there is still a lack of diversity among the top jobs



Councillor Sharon Taylor is the LGA's Lead Member for Equalities

*“Diversity without inclusion is like being invited to the party but no-one asking you to dance”*

**Y**ou could argue that local government is not doing too badly when it comes to equalities.

The average gender pay gap figure is 6.1 per cent, compared with 17.9 per cent for England as a whole, and around four in 10 of all senior council positions are held by women.

But I'm sure we all know that there is much more we can do to further equalities, diversity and inclusion in our local government workforce.

A recent report by Green Park, a leadership recruitment agency, shows that black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) chief executives make up just 3 per cent of

the heads of UK local authorities. Of the top 20 senior management positions in local government, only 3.7 per cent are held by BAME leaders, compared with 7 per cent among FTSE 100 companies.

The LGA's Local Government Workforce Survey 2018 shows that the percentage of BAME staff among the top 5 per cent of earners in our councils has fallen slightly, as has the proportion of people with a disability in these top posts.

The seemingly positive figures on women have been fairly static over the past few years, despite local government having a predominantly female workforce – so there

is more progress to be made there. There is a reason this information matters: the evidence is clear that no organisation can thrive and evolve without increasing the agility, skills and customer focus of its workforce and leadership team. The connection between these qualities, the diversity of the team, the inclusiveness of the culture, and the organisation's relevance to its community is irrefutable.

To put it simply, more diverse organisations perform better. This surely makes it a strategic imperative, not a 'nice to have', for local authorities and that's why I'm keen to ensure this remains a priority for councils' leadership teams.

So why, despite being at the forefront of diversity issues in the past, has progress in local government seemed to slow down? Austerity and cost-cutting restructures had an impact, but we perhaps misunderstood what we were trying to do.

We treated equality, diversity and inclusion as one thing, and tweaked some policies and practices accordingly, but the fundamental shift in culture and perceptions didn't happen. In the workplace, diversity equals representation. Without inclusion, however, the crucial connections that attract diverse talent, encourage their participation, foster innovation and lead to high-performing organisations, won't happen. Diversity without inclusion is like being invited to the party but no-one asking you to dance.

We can and will change this. Councils' transformation programmes present an ideal opportunity to think differently about our jobs and how they get done, about what talent and aptitude looks like, to reinvent our leadership competences and values.

The LGA is supporting councils with new approaches to being more diverse and inclusive. For example, it is working with central government and professional bodies to explore new roles in apprenticeships and new ways of entering teaching and social care; it is offering information and advice to manage staff with mental health issues; and investing in a range of officer and councillor leadership programmes.

There is no 'one size fits all' answer to being more diverse and more inclusive. What you need to do depends on your council, your community's needs, your challenges, and your engagement with your workforce.

The key is to do something – because the challenges around recruiting the right workforce to support our people, places and communities properly remain as great as ever.



For more information, please visit [www.local.gov.uk/workforce](http://www.local.gov.uk/workforce)

# The best start

Derbyshire has been working with an innovative LGA design programme to help more pregnant women quit smoking

**A**s part of our approach to ensuring babies born in Derbyshire have the best start in life, we have been looking at the support we give pregnant women to quit smoking.

That's why I was delighted to sponsor Derbyshire's submission to the Design in the Public Sector programme (see below, right), which explored how to reduce rates of smoking in pregnancy to 6 per cent by 2022.

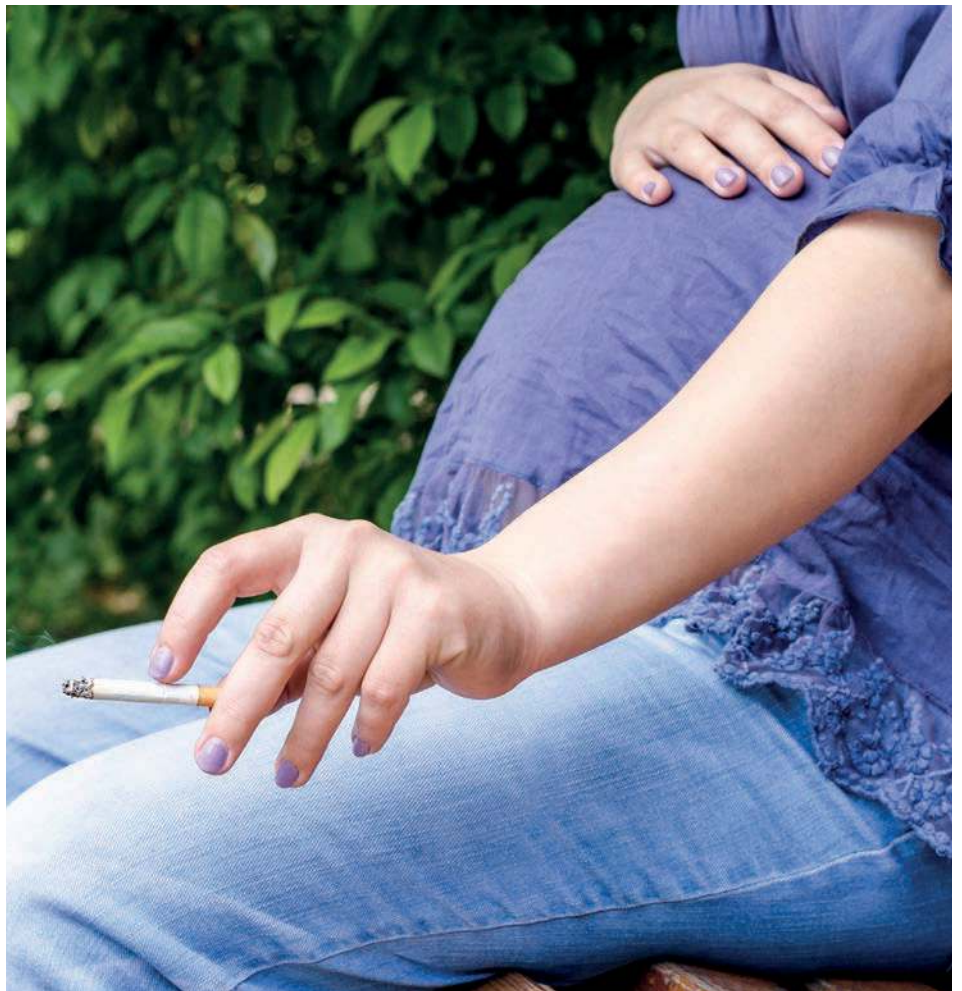
Currently, around 15 per cent of women in Derbyshire smoke while pregnant, compared with 10.8 per cent nationally. To deal with this effectively, we needed an integrated and innovative plan in line with the county council's new 'Enterprising Council' approach, which is designed to meet the challenges in local government while getting the best results from local services for Derbyshire's residents.

As part of this, we're challenging staff to think and do things differently – so being part of the Design in the Public Sector programme allowed the team to think 'outside the box'.

Derbyshire's team was made up of a midwife from University Hospitals of Derby and Burton NHS Trust and staff from our public health team, including Live Life Better Derbyshire (LLBD), our free lifestyle service that helps local people stop smoking, manage their weight and get active.

The tools and frameworks provided by the Design Council's experts challenged the team to better understand the lives of pregnant women who smoke. Using this information, we explored more supportive approaches and services. The person-centred principle shifted the focus from thinking about solutions from a professional perspective to one that focused on what matters to local pregnant women who smoke.

The most important stories we gathered came from women who had smoked through their pregnancy, who shared the concerns they had and the barriers they'd faced that prevented them from quitting. These included family and friends continuing to smoke while they tried to stop and women having very little confidence in their own ability to quit. This information allowed the project team to understand the



**Councillor Carol Hart (Con)** is Derbyshire County Council's Cabinet Member for Health and Communities

challenges experienced by the women.

We've already improved the support we provide to help pregnant women quit, including co-delivery of antenatal clinics by midwifery staff and LLBD stop smoking advisers.

Other ideas include: improving communication between midwives and stop smoking advisers; expanding support to pregnant women to include other elements, such as weight management and getting active; considering the role that family and friends can play in quit attempts; and making sure successful quit attempts are celebrated.

As with many public health challenges, reducing smoking rates during pregnancy requires the involvement of organisations across the local health and care system, and we're beginning to work with even more partners to help make a difference.



**For further information about Derbyshire's Design in the Public Sector project** please contact Iain Little, Assistant Director of Public Health, at [ian.little@derbyshire.gov.uk](mailto:ian.little@derbyshire.gov.uk)

## A design for life

The LGA and Design Council have worked in partnership for five years, with a shared vision to grow the public sector's capacity to deliver efficient and effective public services that improve people's lives.

Our Design in the Public Sector programme supports councils to think about and address key service challenges in new ways, and is fully funded by the LGA. It has previously supported councils' challenges around public health, housing, adult social care and children's services.

Councils that are successfully selected for the scheme embark on a 16-week programme led by design experts, which includes full-day workshops and coaching sessions. Teams are introduced to various design tools and techniques that will enable them to discover and redefine their service challenge collaboratively, ensuring their residents are at the heart of the process.

Applications for the programme are now open. For more information and to apply please visit [www.designcouncil.org.uk/DiPS](http://www.designcouncil.org.uk/DiPS)

**Saturday  
22 June  
10:30 am**

Central Hall Westminster  
London

[neu.org.uk/togetherforeducation](http://neu.org.uk/togetherforeducation)

[togetherforeducation.eventbrite.com](https://togetherforeducation.eventbrite.com)

@Togetherforedu1



An event open to  
parental campaigners, local  
councillors & trade unionists

# Together for education

**A day of  
celebration,  
campaign  
planning  
& rallying**

**Key speakers**

Layla Moran MP  
Education spokesperson Liberal Democrat

Kevin Courtney  
Joint General Secretary NEU

Cllr James McInnes  
F40 Group & councillor for Devon

Kay Tart  
Parent campaigner, Action for Education

Emma Knights  
CEO, NGA

Paul Whiteman  
General Secretary NAHT

Supported by



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# comment

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## The homes we need

**A home should be the anchor that keeps you from being swept into homelessness, poverty and destitution when times are hard.**

This is a clear value shared by people around the UK – it goes against what we stand for to see people homeless on our streets.

For too many people, the prospect of the stable home on which you can build a better life is a distant dream because of high rents, unstable tenancies and low incomes.

Nine out of 10 councils recently told us that more and more people in their area on the lowest incomes will become homeless because the freeze on local housing allowance (LHA) and other benefits means they can't afford to pay their rents.

The Homelessness Monitor: England, which was published in May by Crisis, with the support of the Joseph Rowntree Foundation (JRF), paints a stark – but, to many of us, unsurprising – picture of the challenges facing councils as the number of homes that people in the most vulnerable circumstances can afford dwindles.

Even if you are not made homeless, high housing costs and inappropriate housing can impact on almost every aspect of your life. Families locked in poverty by their housing situation often find that they end up with everything else restricted and restrained – their diet, their health, their relationships and the activities in which their children can take part.

Of the local authorities surveyed for the report, 88 per cent said there is not enough social housing in their area for those who need it – including for those on the brink of



**Darren Baxter** is Housing Policy and Partnerships Manager at the independent Joseph Rowntree Foundation

homelessness. The report highlights the growing pressure councils are under, with seven out of 10 reporting a rise in demand for their homelessness services in the last year.

This is a nationwide issue, not just affecting London or the South; more than three-quarters of councils in the North reported a rise in the need for their services, as did more than two-thirds in the Midlands.

Eight years into the cuts to LHA – and with a freeze to the benefit from 2016 – those who need it the most aren't able to cover their housing costs, leaving them adrift from what should be their anchor: a stable home.

There is action we can take as a country to fix the problem, starting by ensuring housing,

social security and work offer reliable routes out of poverty.

The Government's recent announcement to end no-fault evictions shows that there is a shared appetite to work towards creating the stable homes we need, and to prevent people presenting as homeless because of the actions of their landlords.

The homelessness monitor's findings, however, show us that legal security is not enough on its own. We must also ensure the right kind of homes are made available to everyone who needs them, with adequate support to meet the financial costs of renting.

There is still a long way to go before we fill the vast gap between the homes we have and the homes we need. Crisis and JRF are calling on the Government to urgently address the issues underpinning homelessness by building more social housing and restoring LHA rates in universal credit to ensure it truly covers the cost of rent. This is the only way to keep people at risk of homelessness safe.

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*“For too many people, the prospect of the stable home on which you can build a better life is a distant dream”*

**i** For more information about the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, please visit [www.jrf.org.uk](http://www.jrf.org.uk)

## group leaders' comments

### Hard work pays off with elections success

*“Our members are...well prepared and ready to challenge any administration that puts politics before the public”*

To all of our new and returning members, congratulations on your (re)election.

The May elections proved the most successful on record for our group, with Independents and Greens fielding more candidates and gaining more seats than ever before.

Over the past year, we have seen groups deliver strong engagement and campaign strategies; supported members to host Be a Councillor events; encouraged candidates with disabilities to apply for the EnAble fund; and helped colleagues share resources to better strengthen Independent, Green and smaller party candidates across the country. The hard work paid off.

Since last year, we've gained more than 600

new members and lead a growing number of councils, including Ashfield, Uttlesford, East Devon, Middlesbrough, Epsom & Ewell and North Somerset. Some are solely led by Independents, others are joint administrations, based on a shared commitment to improve local services.

In other councils, our members are now the formal opposition, well prepared and ready to challenge any administration that puts politics before the public.

The electorate has clearly lost confidence in the big parties and trust our members to deliver the positive change our communities deserve. But success on the scale we saw in May isn't simply a response to national politics, it's the result of hard work and commitment by



Councillor Mike Haines is the LGA Independent Group's National Lead Peer

members, their family, friends and supporters.

Our success means we now have more than 2,700 members. Through the group office you can access development programmes and advice as well as ways to inform national and international policy. We also have a dedicated and experienced team of member peers, able to support you as you take up new roles or approach new challenges in your council.

Please do get in touch, visit our website ([www.local.gov.uk/lga-independent](http://www.local.gov.uk/lga-independent)) for the resources we have on offer, including the LGA's guides for new councillors, for councils in no overall control, and for cabinet leads.

For new and existing councillors, this is an exciting time for Independents – let's make the most of it.

## chairman's comment

### Funding for replacing dangerous cladding



Lord Porter is Chairman of the LGA

This time last year, I was writing about the appointment of James Brokenshire as Housing, Communities and Local Government Secretary, and his plans to consult on banning combustible materials on high-rise buildings.

That battle was won, as was our call for funding to replace Grenfell Tower-style cladding in the social housing sector.

Now, a year later, the Government has agreed to foot the estimated £200 million bill for replacing such cladding on private sector residential buildings.

The LGA has been pushing for this, behind the scenes, for a long time. It will be

a huge relief to leaseholders who are not to blame for the dangerous cladding on their homes.

I'm also pleased that government has said it will try to recoup costs from those responsible for the installation of unsafe cladding. It would be wrong for taxpayers to have to pay these bills.

But almost two years since the Grenfell fire, there is still more to do. Councils have a vital role to play in making people safe; as **first** was going to press, we were expecting the Government's consultation on a new building safety regime, which we anticipate will make significant proposals in response to some of the biggest challenges of our time.

On a happier note, I'd like to congratulate those of you who were elected or re-elected

on 2 May. I was honoured to be re-elected to continue to represent the best place in the country, and I know all of us will carry on doing the best for our local communities in these difficult times.

The LGA continues to campaign on your behalf on the issues that matter to local government, not least the need for our sector to be adequately funded.

Our Spending Review campaign (see [www.local.gov.uk/councils-can](http://www.local.gov.uk/councils-can)) is in full swing and was the subject of our recent Smith Square debate, at which Liz Truss MP, Chief Secretary to the Treasury, responded positively to concerns about funding for children with special educational needs and disabilities (see p30).

*“Leaseholders are not to blame for the dangerous cladding on their homes”*

## group leaders' comments



Councillor James Jamieson is Leader of the LGA's Conservative Group

### Political agenda cost local seats

*"The public rightly expects government and MPs to step up and resolve this Brexit crisis"*

We have lost many good councillors in what was a disappointing election, where the major issue was Brexit and the impasse in Parliament.

The public rightly expects government and MPs to step up and resolve this Brexit crisis. Yet nationally, too many from all parties appear to be looking at their own political agenda and not that of the country.

While Labour has also suffered a devastating defeat, this is no compensation for those 1,300 councillors who lost their seats. The only positives were the good performances against Labour in a number of areas, including taking control of North East Derbyshire, North East Lincolnshire, Darlington, and Walsall councils; plus the fact that we remain the largest political group at the LGA.

I would like to extend my commiserations to those many hard-working and dedicated councillors who lost their seats through no fault of their own.

I would also like to congratulate those councillors who were successfully re-elected or elected for the first time. I would particularly like to welcome all our new councillors to our Conservative local government family. I hope that you find it to be a rewarding experience.

I hope many of you will join us at the LGA's annual conference, which takes place in Bournemouth from the 2-4 July. The LGA's Conservative Group will host three group meetings and a dinner, and details about these events will be announced in due course.



Councillor Nick Forbes CBE is Leader of the LGA's Labour Group

### Cutting through the Brexit paralysis

*"Outside London, the number of passenger journeys has fallen by 10 per cent since 2010"*

It was perhaps inevitable that the Brexit Leviathan would drown out any attempts by major parties to make announcements on issues such as local transport or social care during the local elections.

But nevertheless, it was positive during the election to see the Labour Party put some meat on the bones of its plans to address the social care crisis – including funding for new care packages to 160,000 older people, a £350 million significant investment to develop the social care workforce, and £350 million to help people with autism and learning disabilities move back into the community from inappropriate in-patient units.

Labour will also invest £1.3 billion a year to reverse recent cuts to local bus services, as a means of boosting communities and helping the environment. Bus coverage in Britain is at a 30-year low and, outside London, the number of passenger journeys has fallen by 10 per cent since 2010.

Since the election, we have committed to fitting solar panels to more than two million social homes – lowering both carbon emissions and residents' energy bills.

While finding some sort of resolution to the Brexit crisis is vitally important, we mustn't forget that there are other huge problems that people expect us to solve – so we must also find a way to reverse the paralysing effect Brexit has had on politics, government, and the media, and get on with the job.



Wera Hobhouse MP is a Liberal Democrat LGA Vice-President

### A great set of local elections

*"We are putting communities before party political squabbling"*

The ballot boxes have well and truly been packed up, and the local elections are over for another year. It was a great set of elections for us, with an increase of more than 700 councillors – that's 2,500 now, across the country.

We gained control of 12 new councils, from North Norfolk to Cotswolds, Vale of White Horse to Somerset West and Taunton. The icing on the cake for me was taking control of Bath and North East Somerset; Jacob Rees-Mogg MP now has a Liberal Democrat councillor!

We reinforced our control of Three Rivers, Eastleigh, South Somerset and Watford. We also saw the great Dave Hodgson re-elected Mayor of Bedford, with an increase in our number of councillors on the council.

And this doesn't include the places up and down the country where we are forming coalition administrations, such as Eden, Mendip, Guildford, South Oxfordshire and York – where we are putting communities before party political squabbling. This is something of which my colleagues here in Parliament should take notice.

We also gained seats in Labour's so-called Northern heartlands, including Sunderland, Sheffield, Liverpool and Barnsley.

Congratulations to those who won their seats and commiserations to those who didn't win this time round.

The party thanks you, and welcomes you to the Liberal Democrat local government family.



For more information about the LGA's political groups, see [www.local.gov.uk](http://www.local.gov.uk)

# Map your events for Silver Sunday



**Councillor Christabel Flight (Con)** is Westminster City Council's Older People's Champion and Founder of Silver Sunday

**'Silver Sunday', a national day for older people on the first Sunday in October, is an exemplar of community collaboration in tackling isolation and loneliness among older people.**

Beginning in Westminster in 2012, with just 19 events, it had grown to 1,000 fun and free national events across the UK by 2018, attended by tens of thousands of older people.

Silver Sunday is a powerful vehicle to catalyse collaborative action across society, local authorities, businesses, and the care and charitable sectors, creating opportunities to bring people together.

Whether local authorities take the lead or provide practical, facilitation, communication or financial support to community-led or charity-driven programmes, the impact can be significant.

At one of our larger events last year, for 1,000 over-65s, an incredible 88 per cent of the guests said they had made new friends during the afternoon of tea and dancing.

The spectrum of events and activities caters to the varying needs and interests of the older generation – from active sports to entertainment for the house-bound. Older people are given more opportunities to keep their minds and bodies active, learn new skills, make friends and connect with the communities and generations around them.

There are some powerful examples, such as Barnet's Silver Week, Cheshire's Love Later Life Festival, Salisbury's Silver Sunday in Salisbury and

the Westminster and Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea's full event programme magazines distributed to residents aged over 65 – details of which can be found on the Silver Sunday website.

We are actively seeking more councils to create such programmes as part of our ambitious goal to reach 100,000 older people across the UK through 2,000 events in 2019. Activities can be registered on our national event map so more older people can benefit and be granted the opportunities to thrive.



**For more information – including free resources, templates, a 'Guide for local authorities' and a national event map – please visit [www.silversunday.org.uk](http://www.silversunday.org.uk) or email [info@silversunday.org.uk](mailto:info@silversunday.org.uk)**

# Prepared to save a life

**Having witnessed my own father go into cardiac arrest many years ago, and be saved by the prompt actions of a GP who, luckily, was present and performed immediate CPR, I know only too well just how vital it is for us all to learn emergency first aid.**

Worryingly, though, the majority of the British public have never been taught these life-saving skills.

Here in Derbyshire, we have been working hard to change that and to help provide resources that everyone can use.



**Councillor Deborah Watson (Ind)** is a member of Bolsover District Council

My colleague Cllr Jim Clifton and I have worked tirelessly to support the Community Save a Life Scheme (CSALS), created in Derbyshire by trustees Dr Cheryl Berry MBE,

Dr Jill Bethell, and lead trainer John Hutchinson, to ensure that everyone can learn these simple life-saving skills, free of charge.

To raise awareness of the need for everyone to learn emergency first aid, Bolsover District Council and CSALS broke the world record for the largest first aid lesson in 2016, when 1,795 local residents and school children undertook a first aid lesson on Chesterfield Football Club's pitch at the Proact Stadium.

More recently, we have developed a new partnership with the Virtual College, which – inspired by the group's aims – helped CSALS create a new online training solution for teaching life-saving first aid. Anyone can sign up to the free, bite-sized online course and learn basic life-saving skills, at [www.virtual-college.co.uk/prepared](http://www.virtual-college.co.uk/prepared)

We were very proud to launch our Prepared to Save a Life campaign at the House of Commons last October, with pledges of support from MPs, ministers, peers, and company chief executives. The campaign is a collaboration between Virtual College, CSALS and Bolsover District Council, and our mission is to have a life saver on every street corner of the UK.

Considering that, in the UK, one in five adults will witness someone collapse who needs emergency first aid, this simple training can save lives. We hope you, our fellow councillors, will join in and help with our objective of training 250,000 people over the next 12 months.





# A compassionate council



Robert Moran is Chief Executive of Elmbridge Borough Council

**My experience over many years is that councillors and officers share a deep bond of public service and commitment to the people we serve. We are on the same side and want the best for our communities.**

In this context, I tell new employees that working in public services is an alchemy of head and heart, of business efficiency delivered with a large dose of human empathy. This is met with respectful wariness, but I sense there is a growing recognition of the skills needed to meld the two elements, so that 'quality services' means being both cost-effective and achieving a caring outcome.

I have become slightly evangelical about ensuring that Elmbridge is a compassionate council. We deliver essential services to many

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*“We need to be a community resource and not just the council tax collectors”*

vulnerable people in our community – but does this make Elmbridge a compassionate organisation?

To answer my question, I spoke to colleagues, partner organisations and some of our customers. Not through a survey, but by going to a Citizens Advice centre's debt-counselling session, to local food banks and to the B&B accommodation in which we place homeless households.

I heard of the amazing efforts of some of our people to help those in quite desperate circumstances. One person told me that the empathy shown by a council colleague had "saved her life". Another colleague took someone's dog home for a week so that the household could take up an offer of temporary accommodation. All true, heartwarming examples that make a positive human difference at critical times in people's lives.

On the other hand, I was disappointed to hear from some who felt that we didn't always show compassion. Sometimes we don't 'own problems'; our processes kick in and sensitivity is lost. As one person said to me: "If I don't have the funds, I can't pay the bill, however many times and different ways you ask me."

From this, I knew we needed a more compassionate approach.

But how does compassion exist alongside increasing service demands and reduced budgets? The simple answer is that it must. We must find a way to be faithful to our residents;

to support them and protect them. We need to be a community resource and not just the council tax collectors. In uncertain times, this counts more than ever.

Some of our residents just want us to perform our statutory duties; some benefit from healthy walks or socialisation at our centres. Then there are the people whose lives are shaped by what we can or cannot do for them – those who rely on financial support, shelter or a meal, and who need protection.

Our compassion should extend to all our residents. It should emanate from every interaction we have with them. They should know that, at a minimum, we 'have their backs'.

To help our employees show their compassion, we will revise or even remove the key performance indicators in our contact centre, for example, to allow our advisers to speak for longer to the lonely person on the phone. We will review our service planning processes to prioritise compassion over commerciality, and we will support all instances where we can inject compassion into the services we deliver and the approaches that we take.

I am determined the alchemy of head and heart will exist at Elmbridge.



To find out more about Elmbridge Borough Council, please visit [www.elmbridge.gov.uk](http://www.elmbridge.gov.uk)



# Helping older people downsize



Paul Smith is Director of Foundations, the Government-funded national body for home improvement agencies

**The 'national housing crisis' is nothing new. It's a big, complicated problem that needs a big, sophisticated solution.**

The focus is usually on building new homes for the younger generations at the bottom of the housing ladder.

Sometimes, the narrative extends to older people downsizing to free up family housing, based on the assumption that older people no longer need extra bedrooms when their families have grown up and left. Except that, in many cases, grandchildren regularly come around to stay – so those who do choose to downsize tend to make modest reductions in the size of their home.

Many older people stay living in the family home. There may be push factors, such as struggling to maintain the garden or getting up and down the stairs, that give cause to

consider the alternatives. There may also be a shiny new retirement living scheme down the road that has a certain pull in terms of companionship and on-call support.

But these pushes and pulls are often outweighed by emotional attachments and the sheer hassle of moving.

Home improvement agencies are very

skilled at supporting people to carry out repairs and adaptations to their home. We were interested to see if they could use the same skills to provide emotional support and practical assistance to someone who would prefer to move – similar to the role of senior mover manager that is growing in popularity across the Atlantic.

Thanks to a donation from Taylor Wimpey to Foundations Independent Living Trust, we're testing out this approach in Bristol and Calderdale. It's early days, but initial feedback looks promising.

These pilots will be important in testing out one of the recommendations of the review of Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG) that was published by the Department of Health and Social Care at the end of 2018 – that DFG should be used to support a move where that leads to better outcomes than staying and adapting.



You can read Foundations' report, 'From staying put to moving on' at [www.foundations.uk.com/resources/caseworkers/move-on-paper](http://www.foundations.uk.com/resources/caseworkers/move-on-paper)



## The Health and Care Political Leadership Offer

Our **free** support offer, funded by Department of Health and Social Care, is aimed at:

- health and wellbeing board (HWB) chairs/co/vice chairs
- portfolio-holders/lead members with responsibility for adult social care
- anyone with any other leading political role in a health and care system.

### Induction session

26 June 2019, London  
10.30am – 3.30pm

If you are new to a leading role in a health and care system this free induction session is for you.

To book a place email [paige.edwards@local.gov.uk](mailto:paige.edwards@local.gov.uk)

### Leadership essentials

Warwick Conference Centre, Coventry

These **free** two day residential sessions are an opportunity to reflect on the leadership challenges of these roles.

If you are a HWB chair/co/vice chair or have a leading political role in a health and care system:

18-19 July 2019, 15-16 Oct 2019,  
5-6 November 2019

If you are an adult social care portfolio-holder or lead member:

5-6 November 2019

Reflecting responsibilities across health and social care, the November sessions will run simultaneously, linked by shared speakers, facilitators and a joint dinner to provide a wider networking opportunity.

Please contact [grace.collins@local.gov.uk](mailto:grace.collins@local.gov.uk) for more information.

For more information visit [www.local.gov.uk/hcplo](http://www.local.gov.uk/hcplo) Places are limited and early booking is recommended.

# Preventing poor health



**Councillor Tim Hutchings** (Con) is Cabinet Member for Public Health and Prevention at Hertfordshire County Council

**Until I recently became the responsible cabinet member, I had thought very little about public health and how we prevent health problems from arising in the first place. I am certain that my lack of awareness is far from unique.**

The reality is that inexorable demand for adult care services, increasing concerns around mental health problems and the ever-growing demands on the NHS mean that 'putting out fires' has taken priority over preventing them.

Are things about to change? Late last year the Government published 'Prevention is better than cure: our vision to help you live well for longer', which set out a high-level vision to "revolutionise the current approach to prevention". It included a major focus on the role of primary and community care services, and reported that every £1 invested in prevention attracts a return of £14 in societal value.

*"The role of local authorities in shaping healthy places is the ground upon which good health for a population is built"*

We are also told to expect a Prevention Green Paper this summer, which will provide system-wide solutions, identify how to reduce inequalities in health and outcomes, and improve the health and wellbeing of the population.

Potentially, this is a huge opportunity for local authorities. In developing our response, we must consider the context provided by the NHS Long Term Plan while recognising that the NHS – which has a poor track record in prevention – cannot deliver the step-change needed to ensure that our residents enjoy continued good health and resilience alone.

We need to bring prevention to the fore, not as a means of saving the NHS money, but

as a key element in its own right. Progress on developing system-wide action allied to a coherent vision of how to build a society that is more resilient and healthier for longer is a must.

The role of local authorities in shaping healthy places is the ground upon which good health for a population is built. We need to emphasise our role in planning, sustainable transport and the vital role our leisure services play in the wellbeing of our communities. Simultaneously, we need to highlight the evidence that education, employment, freedom from poverty and a safe and high-quality built environment have far more impact on the health of people across their lifespans than the NHS and clinical care.

While commissioning services such as health checks and weight management are important, simply looking at lifestyles is not enough. The lifestyle story – behaviour, diet, and so on – is one of the smallest contributors to the prevention equation: by some estimates,

the lowest-income families would need to spend about 75 per cent of their total income to buy food entirely consistent with Department of Health healthy diet guidelines.

Local authorities across the country are engaged in initiatives that are making an important contribution to the ongoing health of our residents. While we acknowledge the importance and the benefits of doing so, we – in collaboration with our partners and stakeholders – are key players in promoting the health of our nation, and we need to be shouting this from the rooftops.



**'Prevention is better than cure: our vision to help you live well for longer' is available from [www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevention-is-better-than-cure-our-vision-to-help-you-live-well-for-longer](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevention-is-better-than-cure-our-vision-to-help-you-live-well-for-longer)**



# Managing aircraft noise



**Robert Light** is Head Commissioner of the Independent Commission on Civil Aviation Noise

**The Independent Commission on Civil Aviation Noise (ICCAN) was established earlier this year to act as the impartial voice on all matters relating to civil aviation noise in the UK.**

We are an independent, non-statutory body, set up to play a key advisory role in the aviation noise debate. Our creation could not have come at a more important time, and we would welcome your input on our future direction.

Over the past few months, I've spent time travelling across the UK. I've spoken – and, more importantly, listened – to airports, airlines,



**To view and feedback on ICCAN's draft strategy**, please visit [bit.ly/ICCAN](http://bit.ly/ICCAN)

and community groups, as well as academics, trade associations, regulators and experts.

These conversations have shown me that the old ways of working are no longer viable. Residents and community groups have little confidence in the processes that regulate aviation noise; this has led to strained relationships and, in some cases, a breakdown in trust.

These valuable conversations have informed ICCAN's first strategy. We have three key objectives: to help rebuild trust between communities and the aviation industry; to promote consistency, responsibility and accountability within the industry and beyond; and to establish our own expertise, authority and credibility.

To deliver these objectives, we'll be developing best-practice guidance to address many key issues, such as: noise management and community consultation; reviewing noise mitigation and compensation measures; looking at the links between aviation noise and public health; and continuing to have regular engagement with all those affected by aviation noise.

Independence is key to ICCAN's success.

We won't be afraid to make challenging recommendations in search of better aviation noise outcomes. Noise is an important issue that will only get more so as airports seek to grow and airspace changes are introduced.

With more than 25 years of local government experience, and having led a large metropolitan borough council, I know the vital role that local authorities must play in this debate.

I would welcome your feedback on and challenges to our draft strategy, which we are consulting on until 17 June.



## A smile for life



**Sara Hurley** is the Chief Dental Officer for England

**More than 100 children a day – a third of them aged under five – are having rotten teeth removed in hospital.**

Despite tooth decay being largely preventable, tooth extractions remain the most common reason for hospital admissions of five to nine-year-olds in England.

So what can we do? Alongside efforts to reduce children's sugar consumption, we've

seen that starting good dental habits early – such as brushing teeth as soon as they appear, and visiting the dentist by baby's first birthday – can make a difference.

My office and the LGA are supporters of the British Society of Paediatric Dentistry's 'dental check by one' campaign (see [www.bsdpd.co.uk](http://www.bsdpd.co.uk)).

With the support of local councillors, we want to build on this work on early years dental health habits. The Chief Dental Officer England Team has developed an initiative called Starting Well Core, which aims to increase access for the very youngest children – from birth to two years – to dental practices already supporting 'dental check by one' and other early years preventative care measures.

The aim is to give children the opportunity to develop a positive, lifelong relationship with a dental care team, which can nurture a whole range of healthy behaviours, as well as secure a child's smile for life.

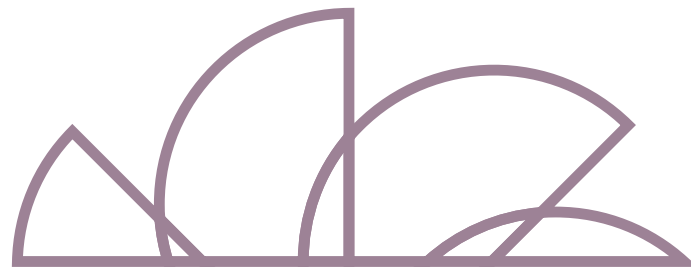
Starting Well Core is a national initiative but implementation rests with local NHS commissioning teams. So the advocacy of local councillors will be vital in identifying and prioritising the local communities that could most benefit from this work, and influencing commissioning via local health and wellbeing boards (HWBs).

HWBs can link with local dental networks to promote these measures with the help of local health, social care and early years' workers. An NHS England Community Pharmacy campaign on children's oral health, running during National Smile Month (13 May to 13 June), offers another opportunity.

As a joint endeavour – with the local commitment of NHS England commissioners to deliver on Starting Well Core, the support of local dental networks, HWBs and councillors – we can offer every child, in every community, a smile for life.



Email [england.CDOExecutive@nhs.net](mailto:england.CDOExecutive@nhs.net) to get in touch with your local dental network, and visit [www.nationalsmilemonth.org](http://www.nationalsmilemonth.org) to find out more about National Smile Month



# NATIONAL CHILDREN AND ADULT SERVICES CONFERENCE 2019

BOURNEMOUTH 20-22 NOVEMBER



#ncasc19

Vital to councillors, directors, senior officers, directors of public health, policy makers and service managers as well as organisations with responsibilities for children and adults in the statutory, voluntary and private sectors, the conference will include a mix of keynote and ministerial addresses as well as plenary sessions by expert representatives from the adult, children and education sectors.

There will also be opportunities to participate in a wide range of workshops and networking sessions. In addition, delegates will be able to visit the exhibition and speak with suppliers and providers of relevant services. **#ncasc19**

**Book your place at [www.local.gov.uk/events](http://www.local.gov.uk/events)**

# parliament

## Debating the Spending Review

Children with special educational needs and disabilities will be a “real priority” in the 2019 Spending Review, the Chief Secretary to the Treasury has told the LGA’s annual Smith Square Debate.

Liz Truss MP said the Spending Review would be launched just before Parliament’s summer recess and finalised in the autumn, with budgets set “in an ideal world, from 2020 to 2023”.

She was one of four high-profile speakers taking part in a lively and wide-ranging debate on the Spending Review at the LGA’s Smith Square headquarters last month.

The debate, hosted by writer, journalist and broadcaster Samira Ahmed, also featured Dr Anneliese Dodds MP, Shadow Minister for the Treasury; Liberal Democrat Peer Baroness Pinnock, a former Leader of Kirklees Council; and Crossbencher Lord Adebowale, Chief Executive of Turning Point.

Ms Truss told the Smith Square audience that “we recognise more funding is needed in special educational needs and children’s services”, and that this was being looked at in the Spending Review.

She also advocated greater devolution of powers to local government, including the freedom to raise more income locally. But she was challenged by Baroness Pinnock when she said she wanted to keep reducing business rates – given councils are expected to become more reliant on business rates income as funding from central government continues to decline.

Describing local government as “the glue that holds our community together”, Baroness Pinnock highlighted the “false economy” of paring back local services, citing how adult social care is now only offered to those with the most critical needs in her own council, Kirklees.

“Early prevention not only saves local public spending but it enhances lives. Why wouldn’t you do that, if it enables people to live at home safe and well?” she said.

“You can’t have local government and



From left: Dr Anneliese Dodds MP, Baroness Pinnock, Lord Adebowale, Liz Truss MP, and Samira Ahmed

public services that keep communities together on a shoestring.”

Dr Dodds also picked up on the importance of prevention and early intervention, but noted that many interventions were being “cut back quite severely” despite having a strong evidence base.

She also called for a proper review of local taxation, given many local authorities are increasingly reliant on council tax and business rates as revenue support grant declines.

“That’s fine if you’ve got predictable revenue streams. But if you’ve got a population that already finds it difficult to pay council tax and you don’t have loads of firms knocking down your door to situate themselves in your area, then you’re in trouble, and your services are in trouble,” she said.

Reflecting on austerity and cuts to preventative and community services, such as youth services and substance misuse support, Lord Adebowale told the Smith Square audience: “I don’t believe that we’re saving money. What we’re doing is kicking the can down the road.”

He cited an example of a man with mental health problems and complex needs, who was unable to access services when his local day centre closed. He ended up on a psychiatric ward and consequently supported by Turning Point – costing more than if community services had been available.

He added: “Local government... is essential to the welfare of the social infrastructure of this country. Unless the Spending Review recognises the hollowing out of the social infrastructure you are responsible for, everyone suffers and we don’t save any money.”



You can watch and listen to the **LGA’s Smith Square Debate: Spending Review 2019** at [www.local.gov.uk/smith-square-debate-spending-review-2019](http://www.local.gov.uk/smith-square-debate-spending-review-2019). For more about the LGA’s work in Parliament, please visit [www.local.gov.uk/parliament](http://www.local.gov.uk/parliament)

# councillor

## Welcome to new councillors

**Congratulations on being elected as a new councillor from myself and everyone at the LGA. I hope you find your time as an elected representative as rewarding as I have, and the LGA a useful resource. I like to think of us as a family and, like all families, we are here to help you as you take on the role of councillor.**

I do hope that during your time as a councillor, you will gain a new perspective on the vital work that councils do in improving the lives of those in our communities. This has been a challenging time for councils, with less money and higher demand for our services.

Despite this, it's still an exciting time to



**Lord Porter**  
is Chairman of the LGA

play your part in local government, as our regular polling shows that local councils and councillors are the most trusted to take decisions about their local areas.

We are all working to ensure that the 2019 Spending Review provides the sustainable financial settlement we need so that local government can continue to deliver for our residents.

At its best, local government gives the strong and ambitious leadership that ensures the nation remains fit and well, economically resilient and continues to thrive. We achieve this through the 1,300 different statutory duties and responsibilities councils offer to residents, who hold us to account via the ballot box. These duties include caring for the elderly and disabled, building homes, keeping our green spaces pristine, repairing

our roads, waste and recycling collection; the list goes on.

Through your work as councillors, you can make the lives of your residents better. And we are your voice, the local voice to national government, working hard to make your case so you can deliver the best possible public services. Secretaries of state and ministers, MPs and Peers, Westminster and Whitehall, rely on us to present your views to them as they decide on the course of the ship of state. You will be able to get involved in this work, to help shape the landscape of local government for the future.

The LGA is also a resource to help you carry out the role to the best of your ability. Our 'Guidance for new councillors 2019/20' outlines just some of the services that we provide. With more than 400 councils in membership across England and Wales, the LGA provides a vast network to share best practice and help support you in your work. I wish you the best of luck in your term in office.

● The LGA's 'Guidance for new councillors 2019/20' is free to download at [www.local.gov.uk/guidance-new-councillors-201920](http://www.local.gov.uk/guidance-new-councillors-201920)

### Top tips from the town hall

*"Always respond to your residents' issues promptly, keep them informed and ensure you get out in your community to let them know what you can do for them."*

**Cllr Mike Bush (Ind), Tendring District Council**

*"Say yes: positions are always coming up on committees, panels and task groups. Your fresh ideas might be exactly what are needed."*

**Cllr Kelly Braund (Lab), London Borough of Merton**

*"For at least six months you will feel like you don't know anything. Democratic services were a lifeline during that time."*

**Cllr Philippa Hart (Lib Dem), South Cambridgeshire District Council**

*"Involve your family and friends. This might include bringing them to community activities such as litter picks and fun days."*

**Cllr James Hill (Con), Northampton Borough Council**





# Positive Parking Agenda

A BPA member initiative

## THE AIM

Change perceptions about parking management and local government's role and, make the parking experience a better one for all concerned.

## THE MESSAGE

**Good parking management equals:**

- Reduced congestion
- Improved accessibility to places
- Safer roads for motorists and pedestrians
- Better air quality

## THE PLAN

- Find out what the public really think about parking management
- Identify problem areas, find solutions and effect change
- Change the parking narrative to a more positive one

## WE'RE ON STAND P53 AT THE LGA CONFERENCE

and we'd love to talk to you about tackling anti social parking behaviour in your community and how your council can ensure it is delivering a positive parking experience.

**39** MILLION DAILY JOURNEYS END AT A PARKING SPACE



**TOP TWO FACTORS  
WHEN CHOOSING  
A SPACE:**

1. LOCATION
2. SAFETY

**AT ANY ONE TIME  
30% OF CITY CENTRE  
DRIVERS ARE  
LOOKING FOR A  
PARKING SPACE**

**72%** of UK zones will miss air quality targets in **2020**

