

Government in Oxfordshire – Council Responsibilities

Oxfordshire has one county council, five smaller district councils and many smaller town and parish councils. Each council is responsible for providing different services to the public. Local authorities are only some of the organisations delivering services to the public in Oxfordshire. There are other government-funded bodies such as the health service and the police.

County council services

- Education and families
- Libraries & Museums
- Roads and transport
- Registry Services
- Refuse disposal (tips)
- Fire and rescue service
- Social and health care
- Leisure and culture

District council services

The main services provided by the five Oxfordshire district councils include:

- Environmental health
- Housing and council tax benefit
- Council tax collection
- Leisure and recreation
- Planning and new developments
- Waste collection
- Car parks
- Street cleaning

Parish and town council services

Parish and town councils represent smaller geographical areas such as Banbury, Chinnor, Woodstock or Buckland. All parts of the county (except certain parts of Oxford) are parished. They either have a town or parish council supported by a parish clerk or hold a

parish meeting. There are 234 parish councils, 15 town councils and 68 parish meetings in Oxfordshire.

A parish or town council is democratically elected once every four years and comprises, on average, 12 councillors. Parish and town councils can raise a precept (a local rate) which is collected by the district council as part of the council tax. Parish and town councils play an important role in the local community and are a vital link to district and county councils and other agencies on local issues.

Parish and town councils have responsibilities for various local amenities, which include:

- Bus shelters
- Public benches
- Local open spaces
- Allotments
- Playing fields and playgrounds
- Parish funds
- Cemeteries
- Town and village halls

Your council tax bill helps pay for services provided by all these local councils and the police. The bulk of the bill (80%) is payable to Oxfordshire County Council.