Proposed changes to councils in Derby and Derbyshire

Have your say

Delivering for Derbyshire, meeting local needs

ONE DERBYSHIRE
TWO COUNCILS

DERBYSHIRE

Introduction

The way local councils in England are organised is being fundamentally changed for the first time in 50 years.

In places like Derbyshire, local services are currently delivered under what is known as a 'two-tier' council structure.

This means that some services are delivered by a borough or district council, and others are provided by Derbyshire County Council. Within Derbyshire, we also have Derby City Council which is a 'unitary' council providing all services to the communities it serves.

Between them, these councils are responsible for a vast range of local services. The county council provides services like social care for children and adults, education services and highways, while district and borough councils are responsible for services such as bin collections, planning, and leisure centres. Derby City Council provides all of these council services to the communities it serves.

This structure dates back to 1974. The way we live our lives has changed substantially since then, and the Government believes services could be delivered more efficiently and effectively by having fewer councils.

In February 2025, the Government asked local councils to work together to draw up initial proposals for new organisations that are:

- Simpler in terms of how they are organised and more efficient
- Better value for money
- Closer to communities
- Able to deliver joined-up services.

Derbyshire's eight district and borough councils submitted a joint interim proposal to Government in March 2025. Together with Derby City Council they propose to create two new councils to serve our communities – one in the north and one in the south.

We believe this approach will create councils which are big enough to deliver, but close enough to communities to listen and respond to the needs of local people.

Have your say

Council services have an impact on the everyday lives of people and organisations across our communities – and it's important that local people have a say about how these services are delivered in the future.

Our public consultation is open from **Monday 30 June to Sunday 10 August 2025** and will be used to shape our final proposal to the Government in November 2025.

The current structure of councils in Derbyshire

Derbyshire is a two-tier area served by eight district and borough councils and a county council.

The city of Derby is contained within the boundary of Derbyshire, but all council services are provided by Derby City Council, which is already a unitary council.

In total, 10 different councils provide services across the county:

Amber Valley, Bolsover, Chesterfield, Derbyshire Dales, Erewash, High Peak, North East Derbyshire, South Derbyshire Councils
'Lower tier' councils are responsible for services including: rubbish collection, recycling, housing, benefits and council tax, planning, leisure
Derbyshire County Council
'Upper tier' councils are responsible for services including: education, transport, social care, libraries, waste management, trading standards
Derby City Council
A 'unitary council' is responsible for providing all Local Government services

Each of the 10 councils has its own political leadership and senior management team and sets its own share of the Council Tax bill.

Some areas also have town or parish councils which are much smaller in scale and are responsible for services, facilities and public spaces within a community such as parks, village halls, allotments, litter bins, local events, etc. These councils are not covered by the Government's plans for local government reorganisation and will not be directly impacted by the proposed changes.

What is being proposed?

The Government has asked local councils to work together to draw up proposals for the areas they cover, in line with a range of criteria.

Our proposal would see Derbyshire's 10 existing councils be replaced by two new authorities:

- A council for northern Derbyshire
- A council for southern Derbyshire

Under the proposal, each of the two new councils will deliver all services in their local area.

There are three possible options for how the area currently covered by Amber Valley Borough Council could be included in the new structure: placed entirely in the northern council, entirely in the southern council, or with different parishes joining each of the two councils, depending on where they may best fit.

The Government has been clear that it wants to see the creation of new councils which can provide all services to local people (known as unitary councils). All councils in two-tier areas have been asked to come forward with final proposals for their area.

This will include considering a range of evidence, alongside feedback from this consultation. Ultimately the Government will make the final decision on if, and how, changes to council structures are implemented.

Option A

A north / south split of the county, with Amber Valley being part of the northern council

KEY

1 = High Peak
2 = Derbyshire Dales
3 = South Derbyshire
4 = Erewash
5 = Amber Valley
6 = North East Derbyshire
7 = Chesterfield
8 = Bolsover District
9 = Derby

Northern Council

Amber Valley, Derbyshire Dales, High Peak, Chesterfield, Bolsover, North East Derbyshire
(Population: 584,000)

Southern Council

Derby City, South Derbyshire, Erewash
(Population: 494,000)

Benefits

- Potential to boost the economic potential and output (Gross Value Added) of the northern council area
- Aligns with current health and police structures

Constraints

- Northern council covers large geographical area which may create service delivery challenges and loss of efficiencies
- Growth northwest of the city may add additional financial pressures to the southern council
- Potential imbalance in the demands for social care on each council

Option B

A north / south split of the county, with Amber Valley being part of the southern council

Northern Council
High Peak, Derbyshire Dales, North East Derbyshire, Chesterfield, Bolsover
(Population: 456,000)

Southern Council
South Derbyshire, Erewash, Amber Valley, Derby City
(Population: 622,000)

Benefits
- More equal geographical areas
- Provides growth potential for both councils
- Better reflects commuting patterns

Constraints
- Disparity in population and the economic potential and output (Gross Value Added) between council areas

KEY

1 = High Peak
2 = Derbyshire Dales
3 = South Derbyshire
4 = Erewash
5 = Amber Valley
6 = North East Derbyshire
7 = Chesterfield
8 = Bolsover District
9 = Derby

Option C

A north / south split of the county, with different parishes from Amber Valley joining each of the two councils, depending on where they best fit

KEY

1 = High Peak
2 = Derbyshire Dales
3 = South Derbyshire
4 = Erewash
5 = Amber Valley
6 = North East Derbyshire
7 = Chesterfield
8 = Bolsover District
9 = Derby

Northern Council

High Peak, Derbyshire Dales, North East Derbyshire, Chesterfield, Bolsover, parishes of Amber Valley* (Population: 567,000)
(*Shipley, Heanor and Loscoe, Denby, Kilburn, Belper, Hazelwood, Shottle and Postern, Idridgehay and Alton, Ashleyhay, Alderwasley, Ripley, Codnor, Aldercar and Langley Mill, Ironville, Riddings, Somercotes, Alfreton, Swanwick, Pentrich, South Wingfield, Crich, Dethick, Lea, and Holloway.)

Southern Council

Derby City, Erewash, South Derbyshire, parishes of Amber Valley* (Population: 511,000)
(*Kirk Langley, Mackworth, Kedleston, Ravensdale Park, Weston Underwood, Quarndon, Turnditch and Windley, Duffield, Holbrook, Horsley, Horsley Woodhouse, Smalley, Mapperley.)

Benefits

- More balanced population and demand for services between the council areas

Constraints:

- Potentially more complex to split between the north and south, including the need for boundary changes
- Disaggregation of services may be more complex

What are the benefits of our proposals?

Big enough to deliver but close enough to listen and respond to local needs

Derbyshire stretches from the borders of Manchester to Leicestershire, encompassing diverse communities from rural Peak District villages to market towns and the city of Derby.

Our approach recognises that local services cannot be one-size-fits-all. Two councils will be large enough to deliver efficiently whilst remaining close enough to our communities to understand and meet local needs.

The two new councils will collaborate where it makes sense to do so but can also tailor services to the needs of the local areas they serve.

Maintains Derbyshire's historic border
Our proposal protects Derbyshire's historic boundaries in terms of the area the two new councils will cover – including the city of Derby, which is a key centre of economic growth.

Building financial resilience
Early forecasts suggest this restructure could save between £56m - £93m* over five years through:

- Reduced duplication of services
- Fewer council buildings
- Fewer councillors and senior managers
- Better economies of scale

* Note: These figures are estimated using figures of similar Local Government Reorganisations. They do not take account of Derbyshire's particular circumstances and are indicative only.

Creates new opportunity for our future
At a strategic level, reorganisation offers opportunities to:

- Eliminate artificial boundaries that can hamper service delivery
- Create stronger local leadership with enhanced capacity for transformation and modernisation
- Develop more strategic approaches to economic development, regeneration and county-wide infrastructure development
- Improve coordination between local services and external partners, such as the police and health services
- Strengthen Derbyshire's voice in regional and national forums

The new councils will also be able to work more efficiently with the new East Midlands Mayor and East Midlands Combined County Authority, which guides large-scale investment across Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire.

Meets Government criteria
Importantly, this approach also meets the Government's criteria for reorganisation – if councils don't come up with a viable proposal for their areas, the Government has indicated it will impose (through legislation) a solution that it thinks will work for Derbyshire.

Have other options been considered?
Leaders of the district and borough councils, together with Derby City Council, have been working together in response to the Government's request for proposals for local government reorganisation.

A range of potential options were explored and assessed in line with our priority to put people and places first, along with the Government's criteria for reorganisation.

We believe the proposal and options we have set out put us in the strongest position to create councils which are big enough to deliver, but close enough to listen and respond to the needs of our communities.

Are there any other proposals for Derbyshire?
Derbyshire County Council submitted a separate initial proposal to the Government in March 2025, which would also see Derbyshire split into two unitary councils – one new council covering all of Derbyshire (except Derby city), and the current Derby City Council. This was submitted before the change in the political administration at the county council in May 2025 and, at the time of writing, their formal position is unclear.

How will these changes be paid for?
Initial estimates suggest that the one-off costs to move services and set up the two new councils could be between £15m - £25m*. This will be funded from a mix of existing council reserves and Government support.

* Note: These figures are estimated using figures of similar Local Government Reorganisations. They do not take account of Derbyshire's particular circumstances and are indicative only.

When will this happen?
Under the Government's current timeline, elections for the new shadow authorities would take place in 2027 and new councils would start to operate from April 2028.

More information
If you would like more information before you take part in the consultation, please visit your local borough or district council website, or the Derby City Council website (links can be found on the back page of this booklet).

Have your say

Your views matter.

We're now asking people and organisations from across Derby and Derbyshire to take part in the public consultation to gather feedback before final proposals are submitted.

This is your opportunity to influence how your local services will be delivered in the future.

Take part:
Online: Scan the QR code below or visit **bit.ly/Derbyshire-consultation**

Hard copies or alternative formats of the questionnaire are available on request – details can be found on the back page of this booklet.

We are also speaking directly with a number of key stakeholders across the county, to ensure the views of partner organisations are captured.

The consultation is being conducted by an independent and specialist research company called Public Perspectives.

Next steps

The consultation closes on 10 August 2025. Your feedback will be used to shape the final proposal for the future of councils in Derbyshire. This must be considered by existing councils and submitted to the Government by 28 November 2025.

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If you would like more information, please visit your council website (links are included below).

If you are uncertain which council covers your area, visit the following website and enter your postcode: **www.gov.uk/find-local-council**

Amber Valley Borough Council	**www.ambervalley.gov.uk**
Bolsover District Council	**www.bolsover.gov.uk**
Chesterfield Borough Council	**www.chesterfield.gov.uk**
Derby City Council	**www.derby.gov.uk**
Derbyshire Dales District Council	**www.derbyshiredales.gov.uk**
Erewash Borough Council	**www.erewash.gov.uk**
High Peak Borough Council	**www.highpeak.gov.uk**
North East Derbyshire District Council	**www.ne-derbyshire.gov.uk**
South Derbyshire District Council	**www.southderbyshire.gov.uk**

Request information in a different format
If you need help or support to respond to the consultation, or would like this booklet or the questionnaire in an alternative format (large print, British Sign Language etc.) or language please contact Public Perspectives:

Email: **Derbyshire@publicperspectives.co.uk**
Freephone: 0800 533 5386 (please leave a message and they will call you back).

Access for Deaf people contact numbers
Relay UK: 18001 0800 533 5386
BSL Signing Service **www.derby.gov.uk/signing-service**
Text: 07774 333412