

Local and national government

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National government

- Two Houses of Parliament
 - House of Commons
 - House of Lords
- Your MP sits in the Commons
- House of Lords is unelected



Image source: Wikipedia

National government

- What issues do MPs deal with?
 - Local government funding
 - Defense
 - Taxation (except council tax)
 - Our relationship with other nations
 - Aspects of public services including the NHS
 - Aspects of housing
 - Aspects of the Environment (think plastic bag levy)
 - Aspects of transport (e.g railways)
 - and a lot more!



Green Party MP Caroline Lucas speaking in a Commons debate on the railways.

Image source: Caroline Lucas on Twitter

Local government

- Local government setups vary across the UK
- In Bicester:
 - Oxfordshire County Council, County Hall in Oxford (most powerful)
 - Cherwell District Council, Bodicote House near Banbury
 - Bicester Town Council, The Garth in Garth Park (least powerful)

Local government

- In Bicester elections happen pretty much every year
 - House of Commons elections get the most publicity (usually every 5 years)
 - But voters in Bicester go to the polls almost every year to elect councillors to one of our local councils
 - You can take part when you're 18 - but only if you register!

Oxfordshire County Council

- Your county councillor deals with:
 - Education
 - Social services
 - Highway (road) maintenance
 - A lot of money (the 2013-14 budget was £899 million)
 - and many other issues



Last year's county council budget meeting

Image source: Oxfordshire County Council on Twitter

Cherwell District Council

- Your district councillors deal with:
 - Collecting your rubbish
 - Recycling
 - Housing
 - Planning
 - and a lot more
- You can watch all CDC meetings via their website.



A Cherwell District Council meeting coming to an end.

Image Source: Cherwell District Webcasting

Bicester Town Council

- Least powerful local council – but still important!
- Your town councillors deal with various local amenities:
 - Bus shelters
 - Footpaths
 - Public benches
 - Allotments
 - Playing fields and parks
 - and more
- May not seem too important but, they still decide how some of your money is spent.



A Bicester Town Council Meeting
Image Source: Bicester Town Council

Local elections need YOU

- The turnout in local elections in this area is very poor.
- Local elections do matter.
- It's vital that when you're able to you use your vote in local and national elections.
- It takes less than 5 minutes to register online.

Voting Summary	
Details	Number
Seats	1
Total votes	2381
Electorate	6411
Number of ballot papers issued	2392
Number of ballot papers rejected	9
Number of postal votes sent	858
Number of postal votes returned	613
Turnout	37%

I contested the election of a County councillor (Oxfordshire County Council) last year. Less than $\frac{1}{2}$ of registered voters actually voted!

Find out more

- Download these slides: goo.gl/LX2WY9
- Visit these websites:
 - North Oxfordshire Green Party: nogp.org.uk
 - The Green Party of England and Wales: greenparty.org.uk
 - UK Parliament: parliament.uk
 - Oxfordshire County Council: oxfordshire.gov.uk
 - Cherwell District Council: cherwell.gov.uk
 - Bicester Town Council: bicester.gov.uk
 - Simple Politics: simplepolitics.co.uk