



Unitary Authority

The term “unitary authority” is used mainly in England to describe the local authorities responsible for areas where until comparatively recently there were separate district and county councils providing different services. For example Cheshire East is a unitary authority that took over the functions of Cheshire County Council and Macclesfield, Congleton and Crewe & Nantwich district councils in 2009.

More generally the term “unitary authority” could just as well describe any single tier local authority (i.e. where one local authority provides all local services):

- The London boroughs
- The English metropolitan boroughs
- All the local authorities in Wales and Scotland

But it is more conventional to use the term “unitary authority” to refer specifically to the single tier councils in England that have been formed or have acquired their unitary status since the Local Government Act 1992 came into force.

In Housing Benefit there are possible advantages for tenants in supported accommodation belonging to one of the English unitary authorities.