

The following table includes most of the statutory powers that local councils can choose to exercise.

Subject	Summary of discretionary powers	Legislation
Allotments	Power to provide land for allotments and to enter into allotment tenancies in or outside the council's area	Small Holdings and Allotments Act 1908, ss.23, 25
Allowances for councillors	Power to pay councillors allowances	The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003
Ancillary power	Power to do anything that will facilitate, be conducive to or incidental to the discharge of its powers and functions	Local Government Act 1972, s.111
Appointment of staff	Power to appoint staff	Local Government Act 1972, s.112
Assets of community value	Power to nominate premises in the Council's area to be entered onto the Principal Council's list of assets of community value	Localism Act 2011, ss.87-108
Bands and orchestras	Power to maintain a band or orchestra or contribute to the maintenance of a band or orchestra in or outside the council's area	Local Government Act 1972, s.145(1)(c)
	Power to charge for admission to performances	Local Government Act 1972, s.145(2)
Bicycles and motorcycles – parking places	Power to provide and maintain parking places for bicycles and motorcycles in the council's area	Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, s.57(1)(a)
	Power to provide stands and racks for bicycles and motorcycles in the council's area	Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, s.63
	Power to make byelaws for the use of and charging for parking places	Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, s.57(7)
Boating pools	Power to provide a boating pool in a park provided or managed by the council	Public Health Act 1961, s.54(1)
	Power to charge a reasonable amount for its use	Public Health Act 1961, s.54(3)

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Borrowing money	Power to borrow money with approval where necessary	Local Government Act 2003, schedule 1, paragraph 2
Burial grounds and cemeteries	Power to provide and maintain open space or burial ground in or outside the council's area	Open Spaces Act 1906, ss.9-10
	Power to maintain for payment a monument or memorial on a private grave (for no more than 99 years) in the council's area	Parish Councils and Burial Authorities (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1970, s.1
	Power to provide and maintain cemeteries in or outside the council's area	Local Government Act 1972, s.214(2)
	Power to contribute towards the maintenance of cemeteries where the inhabitants of the council's area may be buried	Local Government Act 1972, s.214(6)
	Power to grant rights of burial, to place and maintain tombstones or memorials on graves and to charge fees	The Local Authorities' Cemeteries Order 1977
	Power to make byelaws	Open Spaces Act 1906, s.15
Bus shelters	Power to provide and maintain bus shelters on roads or land adjoining roads in the council's area	Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1953, s.4
Byelaws	Power to make byelaws	<i>See specific subject areas in this table</i>
Car parks (off-road)	Power to provide and maintain suitable off-road car parking places in the council's area to relieve or prevent traffic congestion or to preserve local amenities	Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, s.57(1)(b)
	Power to regulate use of car parks and charge for their use	Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, ss.59(3), 35(1)
Car sharing schemes	Power to establish and maintain a car sharing scheme that benefits the council's area or to assist others in doing so	Local Government and Rating Act 1997, s.26

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Charging for discretionary services	Power to charge on a cost recovery basis (that is, not to make any profit) if the council has discretion to provide a service. Power does not apply if the council has a separate power to charge for provision of a service or it is prohibited from charging for it	Local Government Act 2003, s.93
Charities	Power to act as trustee of non-ecclesiastical charity	Charities Act 2011, ss.298-303 Local Government Act 1972, s.139(1)
Cinemas	Power to provide a cinema, or contribute towards the expenses of a cinema in or outside the council's area	Local Government Act 1972, s.145(1)(b)
	Power to charge for admission to a cinema provided by the council	Local Government Act 1972, s.145(2)
Clocks	Power to provide and maintain public clocks within the council's area	Parish Councils Act 1957, s.2
Closed churchyards	Power to maintain a closed churchyard in the council's area if requested to do so by a parochial church council	Local Government Act 1972, s.215
Commons and common pastures	Power to provide land in the council's area for common pasture if the council's expenditure can be recovered from any charges it makes for use of the land	Small Holdings and Allotments Act 1908, s.34
Community gardens	Power to provide and maintain open space as gardens in or outside the council's area	Open Spaces Act 1906, ss.9-10
Conference facilities	Power to provide and encourage the use of facilities in the council's area	Local Government Act 1972, s.144
Contracts	Power to enter into contracts	Local Government Act 1972, s.111
Crime prevention	Power to spend money on crime detection and prevention measures in the council's area	Local Government and Rating Act 1997, s.31

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Dance halls	Power to provide premises for dances or to contribute to the expenses of dances in or outside the council's area	Local Government Act 1972, s.145(1)(a)
	Power to charge for admission to dances provided by the council	Local Government Act 1972, s.145(2)
Ditches and ponds	Power to deal with ditches, ponds, pools, and gutters by draining them or preventing them from being harmful to public health	Public Health Act 1936, s.260(1)(a)
	Power to carry out works for their maintenance or improvement or to pay others to do this	Public Health Act 1936, ss.260(1)(b), 260(1)(c)
Fêtes and other events	Power to provide entertainments and facilities for dancing in or outside the council's area	Local Government Act 1972, s.145(1)(a)
	Power to charge for admission	Local Government Act 1972, s.145(2)
General power of competence	Power for an eligible council to do anything that an individual can do subject to statutory prohibitions, restrictions and limitations which include those in place before or after the introduction of the general power of competence	Localism Act 2011, ss.1-8
Gifts	Power to accept gifts	Local Government Act 1972, s.139
Graffiti	Power to issue fixed penalty notices for graffiti offences in the council's area	Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003, s.43
Honorary titles	Power to confer title of honorary freeman or freewoman	Local Government Act 1972, s.249
Indemnities	Power to indemnify councillors and staff with insurance cover	Local Government Act 2000, s.101
		The Local Authorities (Indemnities for Members and Officers) Order 2004
Investments	Power to invest property in approved schemes	Trustee Investments Act 1961, s.11

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Land or premises	Power to purchase or sell land in or outside the council's area	Local Government Act 1972, ss.124, 127
	Power to appropriate land for an authorised purpose	Local Government Act 1972, s.126
	Power to accept and maintain gifts of land	Local Government Act 1972, s.139
Life-saving appliances	Power to provide life-saving appliances (e.g. lifebelts, defibrillators)	Public Health Act 1936, s.234
Lighting	Power to light roads and public places in the council's area	Parish Councils Act 1957, s.3 ; Highways Act 1980, s.301
Litter	Power to issue fixed penalty notices for litter offences in the council's area	Environmental Protection Act 1990, s.88
Litter bins	Power to provide and maintain litter bins in streets or other public spaces and contribute to their provision and maintenance	Litter Act 1983, ss.5-6
Lotteries	Power to promote lotteries	Gambling Act 2005, ss.98, 252
Markets	Power to establish markets in the council's area and provide a market place and market buildings	Food Act 1984, s.50
	Power for a council that maintains a market to make byelaws	Food Act 1984, s.60
Mortuaries and post-mortem rooms	Power to provide mortuaries and post-mortem rooms	Public Health Act 1936, s.198
	Power to make byelaws to manage and charge for the use of mortuaries and post-mortem rooms	
Neighbourhood planning	Power to act as the lead body for the establishment of a neighbourhood development order or a neighbourhood development plan	Town and Country Planning Act 1990, ss.61F(1), 61F(2) Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, s.38C(2)
Newsletters etc.	Power to publish information about the council, its services and the services provided in the council's area by other local authorities, government departments, charities and other voluntary organisations	Local Government Act 1972, s.142

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Non-councillors	Power to appoint non-councillors to council committees and sub-committees	Local Government Act 1972, s.102(3)
Open spaces	Power to provide and maintain land for public recreation	Public Health Act 1875, s.164
	Power to make byelaws	Public Health Act 1875, s.164
	Power to provide and maintain land for open spaces in or outside the council's area	Open Spaces Act 1906, ss.9-10
	Power to make byelaws	Open Spaces Act 1906, s.15
Parish meetings	Power to convene	Local Government Act 1972, schedule 12, paragraph 15
Planning applications	Power to be notified of planning applications affecting the council's area and to comment	Town and Country Planning Act 1990, schedule 1, paragraph 8
Precept	Power to raise a precept	Local Government Finance Act 1992, s.41
Public buildings and village halls	Power to provide buildings for public meetings and assemblies or contribute towards the expenses of providing such buildings	Local Government Act 1972, s.133
Public rights of way	Power to repair and maintain public footpaths and bridleways in the council's area	Highways Act 1980, ss.43, 50
	Power to enter into agreement to dedicate a road as highway in the council's area or an adjoining parish or community area	Highways Act 1980, s.30
	Power to enter into agreement to widen existing highway in the council's area or an adjoining parish or community area	Highways Act 1980, s.72
	Power to provide warning notices on footpaths and bridleways	Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, s.72(2)
Public toilets	Power to provide public toilets	Public Health Act 1936, s.87
	Power to make byelaws	Public Health Act 1936, s.87

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Recreation	Power to provide and manage recreation grounds, public walks, pleasure grounds and open spaces	Public Health Act 1875, s.164
	Power to make byelaws	Public Health Act 1875, s.164
	Power to provide and contribute to a wide range of recreational facilities in or outside the council's area	Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, s.19
Right to challenge services that are provided by a Principal Council	Power to submit an interest in running a service provided by a Principal Council	Localism Act 2011, ss.81–86
Right to nominate and bid for assets of community value	Power to nominate assets to be added to a list of assets of community value	Localism Act 2011, ss.87–108
	Power to bid to buy a listed asset when it comes up for sale	Localism Act 2011, ss.87–108
Roads	Power to consent or not consent to the local highway authority stopping maintenance of a road in the council's area or stopping up or diverting a road in the council's area	Highways Act 1980, ss.47, 116
	Power to complain to the local highway authority about the obstruction of rights of way and "roadside waste" in the council's area	Highways Act 1980, s.130
	Power to plant and maintain trees and shrubs, and lay out grass verges in the council's area	Highways Act 1980, s.96
	Power to provide and maintain seats and shelters on roads and land bordering any road in the council's area	Parish Councils Act 1957, s.1
Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972	Power to spend a capped amount for which there is no other statutory power. Expenditure must be proportionate and for the direct benefit of the area or the inhabitants	Local Government Act 1972

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Sports and recreational facilities	Power to provide sports facilities in or outside the council's area or contribute towards the expenses of any voluntary organisation or local authority that provides sports facilities in or outside the council's area	Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, s.19
Swimming pools	Power to provide public baths	Public Health Act 1936, s.221
	Power to charge for use of public baths	Public Health Act 1936, s.222
	Power to make byelaws	Public Health Act 1936, s.223
Traffic signs	Power to provide traffic signs on roads	Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, s.72(1)
Theatres	Power to provide a theatre or contribute towards their expenses in or outside the council's area	Local Government Act 1972, s.145(1)(b)
	Power to charge for admission to a theatre provided by the council	Local Government Act 1972, s.145(2)
Tourism	Power to encourage tourism to the council's area or contribute to organisations encouraging tourism	Local Government Act 1972, s.144
Traffic calming	Power to make payments to a highway authority for traffic calming schemes for the benefit of the council's area	Highways Act 1980, s.274A
War memorials	Power to maintain, repair and protect war memorials in the council's area	War Memorials (Local Authorities' Powers) Act 1923, s.1
Water	Power to make use of wells, springs or streams in the council's area and provide facilities for obtaining water from them	Public Health Act 1936, s.125
Websites	Power to provide a website to give information about the council, its services and the services provided in the area by other local authorities, government departments, charities or other voluntary organisations	Local Government Act 1972, s.142