The County Councils Network (CCN) represents 37 English councils that serve county and county unitary councils who together have over 2500 councillors and serve over 24 million people (47% of the population) across 86% of England.

CCN develops policy, shares best practice and advocates policy solutions to Government on behalf of this significant proportion of the country outside the big conurbations.

CCN is a member-led organisation which works on an inclusive and all party basis and seeks to make representations to government which can be supported by all member councils.

CCN is a special interest group of the Local Government Association (LGA).

You can find out more about the CCN by visiting our website

www.countycouncilsnetwork.org.uk/about
Foreword

It is an honour and privilege to be elected Leader of the County Councils Network (CCN) Conservative Group and Chairman-Elect of the CCN. Over the past two years, CCN has transformed under the leadership of Chairman David Hodge and Management Committee colleagues Mark Hawthorne, David Borrow and Ross Henley.

CCN has become an influential and respected network; one willing to challenge and work with Government to deliver better services for local people. Over the course my tenure as Chairman, my overarching objective is to build on these solid foundations and ensure CCN are well-positioned to represent the interests of their residents at a national level.

My number one policy priority for the network this year is to continue our momentum on County Devolution. The Government has rightly signalled a historic shift in power for the County and City Regions of England, something CCN has been championing.

This is only right for the people of England, of whom 24 million reside in counties, who like the residents of Scotland and Wales deserve to have more control over their everyday lives and the local services they rely on to live and work. We are committed to working with our partners, including districts and Local Enterprise Partnerships. However, Government must deliver on its promises to be flexible on local governance and be extremely ambitious in its devolution offer to our areas.

My second priority, and indeed passion, is achieving true integration between health and social care. CCN support a vision for health and social care integration. CCN will redouble its efforts in working with Government to provide a fairer and more sustainable social care funding settlement, reforming the Better Care Fund, and delivering increased investment in community-based services.

Despite the undoubted opportunities presented by devolution and the integration agenda, the spending cuts over the course of this Parliament will be even more challenging than the last. We face further unprecedented funding reductions at a time of rising demand and expectations on local services. Although I am committed to working with Government to balance the national books, deliver County Devolution and radically reform the public sector, I will not stand-by while CCN member councils shoulder a disproportionate burden of deficit reduction. Not only do we need to see counties receive a long-term sustainable funding deal, particularly in adult social care, we need radical reform to the local government finance system.

In embracing the opportunities and rising to the challenges presented during this Parliament, it is my sincere pledge to listen and learn from our member councils. Whether Conservative, Labour or a coalition with Liberal Democrats, counties remain the most innovative and efficient authorities in the country. Part of CCN’s strength lies in its ability to speak on behalf of all counties in England on a cross-party basis. Working closely with my Management Committee colleagues and Leaders of county and county unitary councils across the country, this is an approach that I will strive to maintain and strengthen during my tenure as Chairman.

Paul Carter,
CCN Chairman-Elect
The councils represented by the CCN constitute the largest and most significant single grouping of local authorities in terms of population, geography, economic growth, taxation, and public services.

- **47%** of England’s population (24m)
- **Households** are projected to rise by **18%** by 2037, a rise of almost **2m**
- Counties contain **55%** of all those aged 65+ in England
- The **average county** is **70%** rural
- **10.5m** jobs almost **43%** of the total employment in England
- County economics account for **41%** of England’s GVA, with a combined GVA of **£527bn**
- **The counties of the CCN cover** **86%** of England’s landmass over **44,000 square miles**
- Counties contribute **49%** of all income tax in England, **41%** of stamp duty and **£8.4bn** business rates
CCN – Our Structure

CCN Management Committee

The Council AGM elects the CCN Management Committee which comprises the Chairman and a Vice Chairman from each of the political groups. The Management Committee provides strategic direction, proposes the annual work programme and budget to Council and conducts the day to day business of the network.

The Chairman and Management Committee provide overall leadership for CCN’s policy and campaign work, supported by the Association of County Chief Executives Lead Adviser and President of The Society of County Treasurers.

Spokesmen

To support the work of the Chairman and Management Committee, CCN will appoint a number of Spokesmen who will lead on each of CCN’s policy priorities. Spokesmen will be appointed from existing members of CCN Management Committee and Leaders or Deputy Leaders from CCN member councils.

Spokesmen are allocated on a broadly politically proportionate basis and political groups are responsible for nominating individual Spokesmen for policy priorities agreed by Management Committee. Policy Priorities and political allocations for Spokesmen for 2015/16 are as follows:

- Devolution (Conservative)
- Economic Growth and Prosperity (Labour)
- Public Sector Reform (Conservative)
- Health and Social Care Integration (Conservative)
- Communities and Well-Being (Liberal Democrats)
- Children, Young People and Learning (Conservative)
- Local Government Finance (Labour)

Spokesmen will be invited to attend Management Committee meetings to update on progress with existing work and discuss options for further planned work on their respective priorities. Management Committee will remain the decision making body and will, in effect, sanction and co-ordinate all CCN work to ensure it has cross-party consensus and is aligned to the agreed CCN Work Programme.

CCN Council

The Council holds an Annual General Meeting to elect the office holders and holds two Council meetings per year. At the AGM, the Council meets to approve the accounts of the Network, to appoint an Auditor, to agree the budget of the Network, and to set subscriptions.

Each member authority nominates four elected members to serve on the CCN Council. Additional ‘Top up’ places then ensure that the overall political proportionality of the CCN matches that of our member authorities as a whole. CCN Council meets twice a year in March and September.

CCN Executive Committee

The CCN Executive Committee is responsible for overseeing the delivery of the CCN work programme and meets four times a year. Each member authority is guaranteed at least one place on the Executive Committee, with the guaranteed place offered to the Leader of the authority if they are a member of CCN Council. Proportionality is again ensured using top up places as for Council.
CCN - Vision, Aim & Objectives

Vision
To ensure CCN is an influential and respected network, advocating innovative policy solutions on the challenges facing local government and the wider public sector

Aim
Ensure Counties have the powers and resources to meet the needs and aspirations of their residents on issues of particular importance to our councils and their communities

Corporate Objectives

- **Influence public policy at national level**
  Act as the voice for County Councils and Unitary Counties, advocating and representing members’ views within the LGA, across Whitehall and to key influencers.

- **Produce original research and develop innovative policy solutions**
  Produce or commission original research to support the development and advocacy of innovative policy solutions, addressing the unique demographic, financial and geographical challenges facing counties and their residents.

- **Enhance the profile of CCN**
  Continue to raise the profile of CCN, lead members and officers through development of strong, impactful and consistent external and internal communications alongside a targeted public affairs strategy.

- **Support member councils and share best practice**
  Act as a gateway to Whitehall for member councils. Share intelligence and best practice to support member councils and public sector partners to continue to be the most effective and efficient organisations in the public sector.

- **Corporate resilience**
  Identify strategic risks and set out organisational and financial strategies to ensure the network is resilient and sustainable over short, medium and long term.
CCN – Our Priorities

Our ‘One Team’ approach, drawing on the experience and insight of Members, Spokesmen, and the professional expertise of Chief Executives and other Senior Officers led to the development of *Our Plan for Government 2015-20*. This called for a new English devolution settlement to underpin a wide ranging set of radical policy proposals to be implemented by the Government across five core areas: Public Sector Reform; Economic Growth & Prosperity; Children, Young People & Learning; Health, Social Care & Wellbeing; and Local Government Finance.

Following the publication of CCN’s *County Devolution* report, and the increasing importance of Devolution from Whitehall, CCN has built on the foundations of *Our Plan for Government 2015-20* to set out 6 core priorities which will be the focus of CCN’s policy and advocacy activity.

The new structure will allow CCN to deliver a concerted campaign for our member councils, supported by a strong branding for publications, campaign videos and an updated CCN website. Most importantly, it provides a logical structure for organising the projects of the CCN Policy Team, developing specific and detailed policy proposals on a range of issues to influence the reforms of the Government.

The CCN Work Programme was agreed by the CCN Council in March and is updated periodically throughout the year to respond to emerging issues. Through the CCN Update and specific agenda items at member meetings, the CCN Newsletter and Chairman’s Update members receive regular updates on progress with delivery against these priorities.
CCN - Delivering for Members

Advocacy & Policy Development

Influencing Government, building alliances across Whitehall, and advocating policy solutions.

#CountyDevo
Campaigning Materials - Publications & Videos

Giving Counties a Voice in Parliament
Increasing the profile of counties in the House of Commons

Select Committees

County APPG
COUNTY ALL PARTY PARLIAMENTARY GROUP

Conference, Meetings & Events
CCN’s most successful Annual Conference, six member meetings and support to officers through CCN’s Care Act Implementation Group.

Annual Conference
Council & Executive Meetings
Care Act Implementation Group
Representing Counties in the Media

Providing a voice for counties in the national, regional and trade media.

150+ media hits including 19 national in the BBC, The Times, Financial Times & Telegraph

Appearances on BBC News 24, World at One & Radio 5 Live

Delivery

Influencing Policy at the National Level
- Transformation – CCN becoming an influential and respected network advocating policy solutions
- Our Plan for Government 2015-20 – CCN’s first Manifesto taking our case for counties to the heart of Government
- Care Act – Increased funding allocations, securing policy amendments and influencing the delay of Part 2 of the Act
- County Devolution - making the case and ensuring counties are an equal part of the devolution agenda
- Councillors’ Mileage – leading sector advocacy and changing Government policy
- Whitehall – Targeted submissions to consultations and calls for evidence
- Government - Securing member and officer meetings with Ministers, civil servants and key influencers

Original Research and Member Surveys supporting Policy Development
- Groundbreaking research on Care Markets
- Analysis of health, social care and Public Health funding in Counties
- Members views on Children’s Services, Devolution, Spending Review and Broadband
- Established officer networks to support and advise CCN policy development

Effective Communications and Public Affairs
- 150+ placements in national media and trade press
- Strong branding, campaigning materials and videos raising the profile and getting our messages heard
- Most successful CCN Annual Conference
- Representation at conferences, seminars and events
- New website and active social media presence

Giving Counties a Voice in Parliament
- Establishing County APPG with CCN as Secretariat
- Two Inquiries producing influential reports on Economic Growth and Health and Social Care Integration
- MP’s and Lord’s Briefings and support through the Parliamentary process
CCN – Your Team

In 2014 Management Committee commissioned a review to ensure CCN had the right officer structure, and that finite resources were being used effectively, in support of the new vision and direction for the organisation.

Following the appointment of Simon Edwards as the new CCN Director, and the promotion of James Maker to Policy Manager, there have been a number of further changes and additions to the Core Team in Westminster. Elizabeth Hunter-Gray was initially seconded from Essex County Council and Michael Chard seconded from Buckinghamshire County Council. Both have now been confirmed in permanent positions.

The current CCN team and key areas of responsibility are as follows:

With the introduction of a Commissioning and Campaigning budget the team will be able to bring in expertise to support research and advocacy activity.

This new structure and delegation of responsibilities will enable CCN to build on the momentum gained from the launch of Our Plan for Government 2015-2020, and support CCN Management Team and CCN Spokesmen in continuing to raise the profile of the organisation and improve its advocacy and policy development functions. This will help deliver an effective and efficient representation body for member councils.
CCN

COUNTY COUNCILS NETWORK

Founded in 1997, the County Councils Network (CCN) is a network of 37 County Councils and Unitary authorities that serve county areas. We are a cross-party organisation, expressing the views of member councils to the wider Local Government Association and to central government departments.

To discuss any of our proposals in greater detail, please contact:

Simon Edwards  
Director  
020 7664 3002  
Simon.Edwards@local.gov.uk

James Maker  
Policy Manager  
020 7664 3009  
James.Builder@local.gov.uk

If you would like further information on CCN, including the latest policy briefings, publications, news and events, please visit our website at www.countycouncilsnetwork.org.uk

Follow us on twitter @CCNOffice

www.countycouncilsnetwork.org.uk