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Queen's Speech – Decentralisation and Localism Bill

"A Bill will be introduced to devolve greater powers to councils and neighbourhoods and give local communities control over housing and planning decisions."

The purpose of the Bill is to:

The Bill would devolve greater powers to councils and neighbourhoods and give local communities control over housing and planning decisions.

The main benefits of the Bill would be:

- Empowering local people.
- Freeing local government from central and regional control.
- Giving local communities a real share in local growth.
- A more efficient and more local planning system.

The main elements of the Bill are:

- Abolish Regional Spatial Strategies.
- Return decision-making powers on housing and planning to local councils.
- Abolish the Infrastructure Planning Commission and replace it with an efficient and democratically accountable system that provides a fast-track process for major infrastructure projects.
- New powers to help save local facilities and services threatened with closure, and give communities the right to bid to take over local state-run services.
- Abolish the Standards Board regime.
- Give councils a general power of competence.
- Require public bodies to publish online the job titles of every member of staff and the salaries and expenses of senior officials.
- Give residents the power to instigate local referendums on any local issue and the power to veto excessive council tax increases.

- Greater financial autonomy to local government and community groups.
- Create Local Enterprise Partnerships (to replace Regional Development Agencies) – joint local authority-business bodies brought forward by local authorities to promote local economic development.
- Form plans to deliver a genuine and lasting Olympic legacy.
- Outright abolition of Home Improvement Packs.
- Create new trusts that would make it simpler for communities to provide homes for local people.
- Review Housing Revenue Account.

Related documents:

[The Coalition: our programme for government \(PDF\)](#)

Existing legislation in this area is:

This would be a major piece of legislation that would affect a wide range of existing housing, planning and local government legislation dating back decades in some cases.

Devolution:

The Bill applies to England and Wales. As this Bill is focused on the devolved area of local government we would not anticipate that it would apply to Scotland. However, because of the wide scope of this Bill the possibility of devolution implications cannot be ruled out at this time