



Local elections 2009

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This paper summarises the results of the local and mayoral elections held on 4 June 2009.

Elections were held in all 27 shire counties in England (all seats) and seven English unitary authorities (Bedford, Bristol (one-third of seats), Central Bedfordshire, Cornwall, Isle of Wight, Shropshire and Wiltshire).

The Conservatives made a net gain of seven councils and 244 seats. Labour made a net loss of four councils and 291 seats. The Liberal Democrats made a net loss of one council and two seats.

The Greens gained eight seats in net terms while the UK Independence Party made a net gain of seven seats, and the British National Party made a net gain of three seats

Estimates suggest that the Conservatives won 35% of the national equivalent share of the vote, Liberal Democrats 25% and Labour 22%.

Turnout was estimated to be 35%.

There were mayoral elections in three areas and UK-wide elections for the European Parliament on the same day

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Summary of main points

Elections were held in all 27 shire counties in England (all seats) and seven English unitary authorities (Bedford, Bristol (one-third of seats), Central Bedfordshire, Cornwall, Isle of Wight, Shropshire and Wiltshire).

There were no elections were scheduled in Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland, London Boroughs, or the remaining Unitary Authorities and Shire Districts in England.

The **Conservatives** won or retained control of 30 councils, a net gain of seven, comprising four gains from Labour (Derbyshire, Lancashire, Nottinghamshire and Staffordshire), two from Liberal Democrats (Devon and Somerset), and one from No Overall Control (NOC).

Labour lost control of all four shire county councils it had held since the last election in 2005 to the Conservatives (Derbyshire, Lancashire, Nottinghamshire and Staffordshire)

The **Liberal Democrats** won control of one council, a net loss of two, comprising one councils gained from NOC (Bristol), two losses to the Conservatives (Devon and Somerset), and one to No Overall Control (Cornwall).

The **Greens** gained eight seats in net terms while the UK Independence Party made a net gain of seven seats, the **British National Party** made a net gain of three seats

Following the elections, a further three councils went to **No Overall Control** (NOC)

At the elections, the estimated national equivalent share of vote was Conservatives 35%, Labour 22%, and Liberal Democrats 25%. Estimated turnout was 35%.

There were mayoral elections in three areas (Doncaster, Hartlepool and North Tyneside) and UK-wide election for the European Parliament on the same day. The results of the European Parliament elections are presented in [Library Research Paper 09/53](#).

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I Introduction

Elections were held on 4 June 2009 for 2,363 seats in 27 shire counties in England and seven unitary authorities (Bedford, Bristol (one-third of seats), Central Bedfordshire, Cornwall, Isle of Wight, Shropshire and Wiltshire). These elections were on the same day as the UK-wide European Parliament elections.

There were no elections scheduled in Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland, London Boroughs, or the remaining Unitary Authorities and Shire Districts in England.

The election was delayed in Kirk Hallam division in Derbyshire. This will take place on 16 July 2009, due to the death of Michael Sherwood, Conservative Party candidate.

This paper is intended as a provisional summary of the results, and is based on media reports and data supplied by the BBC's Political Research unit, and local authorities. The compilation of the final results, including votes cast at ward- and authority-level, shares of the vote, and turnout will be published later in the year by Professors Rallings and Thrasher of the University of Plymouth in their *Local Elections Handbook 2009*.

Comparisons of net gains and losses are based on council composition immediately prior to the elections. Control is attributed on a simple numerical basis – minority administrations and coalitions are not taken into account; they are regarded as the authority being under no overall (single party) control

II The results

A. Council control

The **Conservatives** won or retained control of 30 councils, a net gain of seven, comprising four gains from Labour (Derbyshire, Lancashire, Nottinghamshire and Staffordshire), two from Liberal Democrats (Devon and Somerset), and one from No Overall Control (NOC). Following the elections, the Conservatives control 222 local authorities in Great Britain overall.

Labour lost control of the four shire county councils it held at the last election in 2005 to the Conservatives (Derbyshire, Lancashire, Nottinghamshire and Staffordshire). Overall, Labour lost 291 councillors and they now control 44 councils in Great Britain.

The **Liberal Democrats** won control of one council, a net loss of two, comprising one council gained from NOC (Bristol), two losses to the Conservatives (Devon and Somerset), and the loss of Cornwall to No Overall Control (NOC). The Liberal Democrats now control 27 councils in Great Britain.

The **Greens** gained eight seats net, with the **UK Independence Party** also gaining seven net seats. The **British National Party** gained three seats. All three parties won a county council seat for the first time.

Following the elections, one council went from **No Overall Control** to the Conservatives (Warwickshire), taking the total number of authorities under NOC from 135 to 134.

The estimated national equivalent share of vote was Conservatives 35%, Liberal Democrats 25%, Labour 22%, and 'other parties' on 18%. Estimated turnout was 35%.

Summary: changes in council control

Councils holding elections on 4 June









	Pre-election	Post-election	Change
CON	23	30	+7
LAB	4	0	-4
LD	3	1	-2
Others	0	0	0
NOC	4	3	-1

Summary: changes in council control*All local authorities, Great Britain*

	Pre-election	Post-election	Change
CON	215	222	+7
LAB	48	44	-4
LD	29	27	-2
Others	13	13	0
NOC	135	134	-1

Changes in council control**Conservative (net +7)****Gains (7)**



From Labour (4)

-   Derbyshire
-   Lancashire
-   Nottinghamshire
-   Staffordshire

From Liberal Democrat (2)


-   Devon
-   Somerset

From NOC (1)

-   Warwickshire

Losses (0)**Labour (net -4)****Gains (0)****Losses (4)**

To Conservative (4)

-   Derbyshire
-   Lancashire
-   Nottinghamshire
-   Staffordshire

Liberal Democrat (net -2)**Gains (1)**

From NOC (1)



-   Bristol

Losses (3)

To Conservative (2)

-   Devon
-   Somerset

To NOC (1)









-   Cornwall

B. Council seats

The table below summaries seats won, and net gains and losses by party:

Seats won and net gains

Seats contested on 4 June

	Seats won	Net change
 Conservative	1,531	+244
 Liberal Democrat	484	-2
 Labour	178	-291
 Green	18	+8
 Residents Association	9	+2
 UK Independence Party	7	+7
 British National Party	3	+3
 Others	133	+21
Total	2,363	-8

Source: Local Government Elections Centre and BBC Political Research

The **Conservatives** won 1,531 shire county seats, representing 65% of the total contested and a net gain of 244 seats. The party won control of four councils (Derbyshire, Lancashire, Nottinghamshire and Staffordshire) from Labour which the Conservatives last held in 1977. The party also gained control of Devon and Somerset from the Liberal Democrats these were last held by the party in 1989. They also won Warwickshire from No Overall Control.

Labour won 178 seats, 8% of the total contested and a net loss of 291 seats. The party lost control of all the four shire county councils it had held at the last election in 2005, to the Conservatives.

The **Liberal Democrats** won 484 seats, 20% of seats contested and a net loss of two. The party lost control of Devon and Somerset to the Conservatives, and Cornwall to No Overall Control. The party also gained Bristol from No Overall Control.

Other minor parties and independent candidates won 170 seats representing 7% of the total contested. The **Green Party** won 18 seats, a net gain of 8. The **UK Independence Party** won 7 seats, and the **British National Party** won three seats.

C. National equivalent share of the vote

Professors Rallings and Thrasher at the University of Plymouth estimate that the Conservatives won 35% of the national (Great Britain) equivalent share of the vote, Labour 22% and the Liberal Democrats 25%. This is an estimated share of the vote in all authorities had elections been held across Great Britain. It is not necessarily equivalent to the share of the vote in those seats contested. The table and chart below show trends in the national equivalent share of the vote. Where general elections were held simultaneously, the general election result is shown

Estimated national equivalent share of vote at local elections, 1979-2009

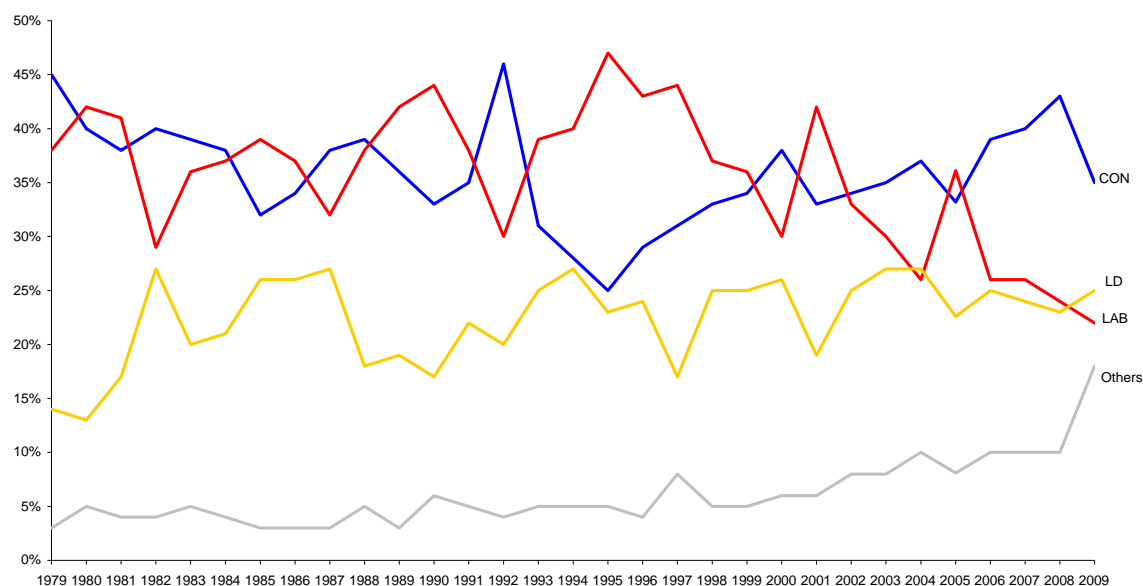
Great Britain

	CON	LAB	LD	Others
1979	45%	38%	14%	3%
1980	40%	42%	13%	5%
1981	38%	41%	17%	4%
1982	40%	29%	27%	4%
1983	39%	36%	20%	5%
1984	38%	37%	21%	4%
1985	32%	39%	26%	3%
1986	34%	37%	26%	3%
1987	38%	32%	27%	3%
1988	39%	38%	18%	5%
1989	36%	42%	19%	3%
1990	33%	44%	17%	6%
1991	35%	38%	22%	5%
1992	46%	30%	20%	4%
1993	31%	39%	25%	5%
1994	28%	40%	27%	5%
1995	25%	47%	23%	5%
1996	29%	43%	24%	4%
1997	31%	44%	17%	8%
1998	33%	37%	25%	5%
1999	34%	36%	25%	5%
2000	38%	30%	26%	6%
2001	33%	42%	19%	6%
2002	34%	33%	25%	8%
2003	35%	30%	27%	8%
2004	37%	26%	27%	10%
2005	33%	36%	23%	8%
2006	39%	26%	25%	10%
2007	40%	26%	24%	10%
2008	43%	24%	23%	10%
2009	35%	22%	25%	18%

Local elections in 1979, 1997, 2001 and 2005 were held on same day as a general election, and in these years general election vote shares are shown in bold.

Sources: Rallings and Thrasher, *British Electoral Facts 1832-1999*
 Rallings and Thrasher, *Local Elections Handbook*, various
 Local Government Elections Centre, personal communication

Estimated national equivalent share of the vote at local elections since 1979
Great Britain



D. Post election council composition

The table below summarises council composition and control for all local authorities in Great Britain, including those where elections were not held.

Estimated post-election council composition and control: Great Britain

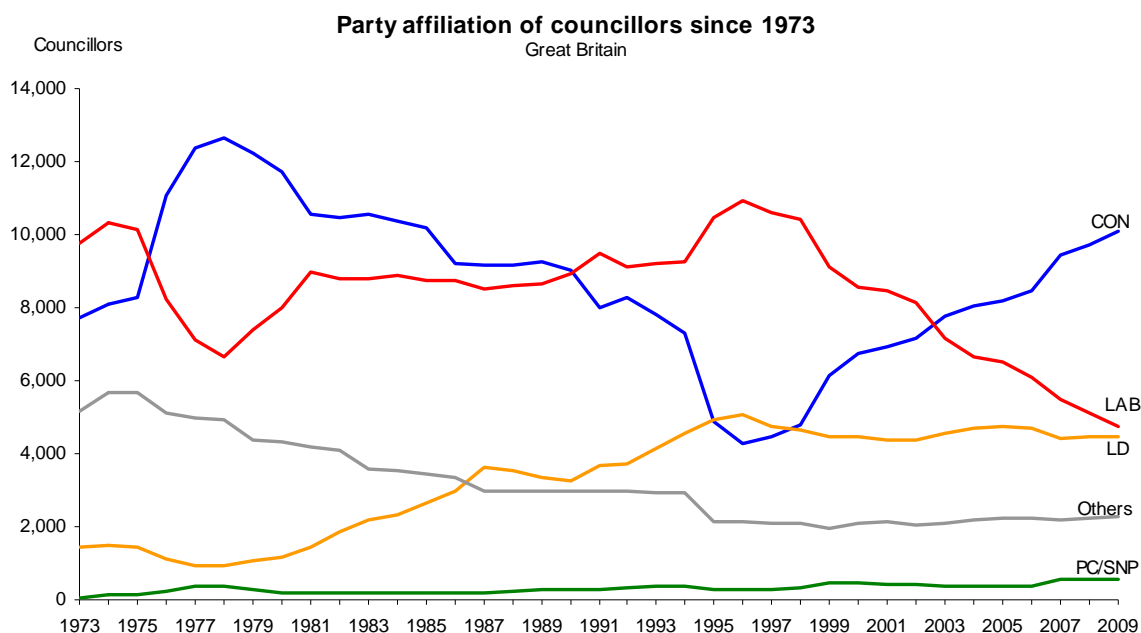
	Number				% total					
	CON	LAB	LD	OTH	CON	LAB	LD	OTH		
Councillors										
London	784	683	322	72	42%	37%	17%	4%		
Metropolitan boroughs	621	1,093	585	146	25%	45%	24%	6%		
Counties	1,261	145	346	105	68%	8%	19%	6%		
Unitary authorities	1,319	689	642	264	45%	24%	22%	9%		
Shire districts	5,786	1,429	2,219	1,139	55%	14%	21%	11%		
England	9,771	4,039	4,114	1,726	50%	21%	21%	9%		
Welsh unitary authorities	174	346	166	578	14%	27%	13%	46%		
Scottish unitary authorities	143	348	166	565	12%	28%	14%	46%		
Great Britain	10,088	4,733	4,446	2,869	46%	21%	20%	13%		
	CON	LAB	LD	OTH	NOC	CON	LAB	LD	OTH	NOC
Councils controlled										
London boroughs	14	7	3	0	8	44%	22%	9%	0%	25%
Metropolitan boroughs	6	12	4	0	14	17%	33%	11%	0%	39%
County councils	26	0	0	0	1	96%	0%	0%	0%	4%
Unitary authorities	23	8	2	0	20	43%	15%	4%	0%	38%
Shire districts	151	12	18	5	52	63%	5%	8%	2%	22%
England	220	39	27	5	95	57%	10%	7%	1%	25%
Welsh unitary authorities	2	2	0	5	13	9%	9%	0%	23%	59%
Scottish unitary authorities	0	2	0	3	27	0%	6%	0%	9%	84%
Great Britain	222	43	27	13	134	51%	10%	6%	3%	31%

Source: Rallings & Thrasher (Local elections handbook 2008), BBC and Local Government Information online

The **Conservatives** have almost 10,100 councillors, 46% of the Great Britain total, and the party's highest total since 1985. The number of Conservative councillors has risen consistently since 1997. The Conservatives control 222 councils, 50% of the total, including 96% of county councils and 63% of shire district councils. The Conservatives control two councils in Wales but none of the 32 unitary authorities in Scotland. In England 50% of councillors are Conservatives.

Labour has almost 4,700 councillors, 21% of the Great Britain total and their lowest number since the reorganisation of local government in 1973. The number of Labour councillors has fallen consistently since 1998. Labour controls 44 councils, 10% of the total number of councils in Great Britain. They control one-third (33%) of metropolitan boroughs and just over one-in-five (22%), London boroughs, but just 6% of Scottish councils and 5% of shire districts in England. There are currently no county council under Labour control.

The **Liberal Democrats** have just over 4,400 councillors, 20% of the Great Britain total. The number of Liberal Democrat councillors has fluctuated around its current level for 3 years and fallen back from its highest of 4,700 4 years ago. The party now has 21 few councillors compared to 2008 The Liberal Democrats control 27 councils, 6% of the Great Britain total. They do not control any of the unitary authorities in Scotland or Wales.



Party affiliation of councillors 1973-2009

Great Britain

	Number					Total	% total				
	CON	LAB	LD	PC/SNP	Others		CON	LAB	LD	PC/SNP	Others
1973	7,709	9,781	1,427	65	5,183	24,165	32%	40%	6%	0%	21%
1974	8,102	10,325	1,474	145	5,664	25,710	32%	40%	6%	1%	22%
1975	8,301	10,117	1,462	145	5,685	25,710	32%	39%	6%	1%	22%
1976	11,077	8,213	1,113	223	5,132	25,758	43%	32%	4%	1%	20%
1977	12,370	7,115	950	349	4,965	25,749	48%	28%	4%	1%	19%
1978	12,645	6,644	923	349	4,920	25,481	50%	26%	4%	1%	19%
1979	12,222	7,410	1,059	301	4,388	25,380	48%	29%	4%	1%	17%
1980	11,738	8,011	1,149	186	4,325	25,409	46%	32%	5%	1%	17%
1981	10,545	8,999	1,455	172	4,208	25,379	42%	35%	6%	1%	17%
1982	10,447	8,774	1,850	177	4,099	25,347	41%	35%	7%	1%	16%
1983	10,557	8,782	2,171	175	3,570	25,255	42%	35%	9%	1%	14%
1984	10,393	8,870	2,331	179	3,515	25,288	41%	35%	9%	1%	14%
1985	10,191	8,746	2,633	177	3,432	25,179	40%	35%	10%	1%	14%
1986	9,216	8,759	2,971	191	3,364	24,501	38%	36%	12%	1%	14%
1987	9,141	8,525	3,640	203	2,974	24,483	37%	35%	15%	1%	12%
1988	9,150	8,601	3,518	254	2,968	24,491	37%	35%	14%	1%	12%
1989	9,242	8,636	3,343	258	2,958	24,437	38%	35%	14%	1%	12%
1990	9,020	8,920	3,265	264	2,968	24,437	37%	37%	13%	1%	12%
1991	7,985	9,504	3,672	292	2,997	24,450	33%	39%	15%	1%	12%
1992	8,288	9,102	3,728	334	2,977	24,429	34%	37%	15%	1%	12%
1993	7,802	9,213	4,123	358	2,948	24,444	32%	38%	17%	1%	12%
1994	7,286	9,257	4,551	392	2,941	24,427	30%	38%	19%	2%	12%
1995	4,883	10,461	4,942	294	2,157	22,737	21%	46%	22%	1%	9%
1996	4,276	10,929	5,078	298	2,157	22,738	19%	48%	22%	1%	9%
1997	4,449	10,608	4,754	301	2,076	22,188	20%	48%	21%	1%	9%
1998	4,772	10,411	4,629	304	2,083	22,199	21%	47%	21%	1%	9%
1999	6,144	9,134	4,485	444	1,973	22,180	28%	41%	20%	2%	9%
2000	6,748	8,536	4,472	444	2,078	22,278	30%	38%	20%	2%	9%
2001	6,941	8,487	4,382	418	2,132	22,360	31%	38%	20%	2%	10%
2002	7,177	8,117	4,379	412	2,069	22,154	32%	37%	20%	2%	9%
2003	7,776	7,175	4,581	383	2,101	22,016	35%	33%	21%	2%	10%
2004	8,033	6,652	4,708	361	2,201	21,955	37%	30%	21%	2%	10%
2005	8,193	6,500	4,743	357	2,233	22,044	37%	29%	22%	2%	10%
2006	8,482	6,105	4,708	368	2,229	21,892	39%	28%	22%	2%	10%
2007	9,431	5,483	4,420	546	2,164	22,044	43%	25%	20%	2%	10%
2008	9,721	5,122	4,467	569	2,225	22,104	44%	23%	20%	3%	10%
2009	10,088	4,733	4,446	569	2,300	22,136	46%	21%	20%	3%	10%

Note: LD includes predecessor parties

Sources: House of Commons Library Research Paper 08/12 Election Statistics:UK 1918-2007
Rallings and Thrasher *Local Elections Handbook*
Local Government Information online, <http://www.gwydir.demon.co.uk/uklocalgov>

E. Mayoral elections

Mayoral elections were held in Doncaster, Hartlepool, and North Tyneside. This was the third time that routine mayoral elections had been held in these authorities, although in North Tyneside this was the fourth mayoral election following a by-election in June 2003.


























One incumbent candidate failed to retain his post, while another did not stand for re-election.

- In Hartlepool, Stuart Drummond, also known as “H'Angus the Monkey”, was re-elected for a third term. He is the first directly elected mayor in the UK to win a third term. He was first elected in 2002.

- In North Tyneside, the Conservative candidate Linda Arkley defeated the Labour incumbent. She was first elected as mayor at a by-election in 2003, but subsequently defeated by the incumbent in 2005.
- The English Democrat, Peter Davies narrowly beat the Independent candidate Michael Maye in Doncaster. Davies had fewer first round votes than his rival, but overtook him once the second preference votes had been allocated.

Total turnout in Hartlepool was 31.9%; North Tyneside was 38.4% and 38.1% in Doncaster.

Results of Mayoral elections, 4 June 2009

		Turnout (%)	First vote		Second vote		Total vote	
			number	%	number	%	number	%
Doncaster		38.1						
	Peter Davies		16,961	25%	8,383	51.7%	25,344	50.4%
	Michael Maye		17,150	26%	7,840	48.3%	24,990	49.6%
	Sandra Holland		16,549	25%				
	Jonathan Wood		12,198	18%				
	Stuart Exelby		2,152	3%				
	Michael Felse		2,051	3%				
			67,061	100%	16,223	100%	50,334	100%
Hartlepool		31.9						
#	Stuart Drummond		5,268	25%	1,599	47.8%	6,867	53.3%
	Ian Cameron		4,280	20%	1,743	52.2%	6,023	46.7%
	Chris Simmons		2,921	14%				
	Martyn Aiken		1,844	9%				
	Tony Morrell		1,457	7%				
	Cheryl Dunn		1,352	6%				
	David Young		1,092	5%				
	Jim Gillespie		986	5%				
	Iris Ryder		594	3%				
	Allison Willetts		564	3%				
	Lynne Gillam		464	2%				
	Barbara Jackson		461	2%				
	Christine Blakey		204	1%				
			21,487	100%	3,342	100%	12,890	100%
North Tyneside		38.4						
	Linda Arkley		24,784	42%	2,299	45%	27,083	54%
#	John Harrison		19,823	34%	2,811	55%	22,634	46%
	Nigel John Yuscroft		7,343	13%				
	John Burrows		3,398	6%				
	Martin Collins		1,995	3%				
	Robert Nigel Batten		1,086	2%				
			58,429	100%	5,110	100%	49,717	100%

incumbent

* Community Group

Source: Local Government Information Online

III Reference table and map

The following tables show the 2009 local election results in 27 shire counties in England and seven unitary authorities, including post-election council composition, share of seats.

A map is provided showing the post-election party of control in each of the authorities holding elections in 2009

Shire County and Unitary Authority election results, England: 2009 - Council composition and share of seats

	Control	Council composition						TOTAL	share of seats (%)						TOTAL	
		CON	LAB	LD	GREEN	IND	OTHER		CON	LAB	LD	GREEN	IND	OTHER		
Shire Authorities																
Buckinghamshire	■ ■	Con hold	46	0	11	0	0	0	57	81%	0%	19%	0%	0%	0%	100%
Cambridgeshire	■ ■	Con hold	42	2	23	1	0	0	68	62%	3%	34%	1%	0%	0%	100%
Cumbria	■ ■	NOC - no change	38	24	16	0	5	1	84	45%	29%	19%	0%	6%	1%	100%
* Derbyshire	■ ■	Con gain from Lab	33	21	7	0	0	1	62	53%	34%	11%	0%	0%	2%	100%
Devon	■ ■	Con gain from LD	41	4	14	1	2	0	62	66%	6%	23%	2%	3%	0%	100%
Dorset	■ ■	Con hold	28	0	16	0	1	0	45	62%	0%	36%	0%	2%	0%	100%
East Sussex	■ ■	Con hold	29	4	13	0	3	0	49	59%	8%	27%	0%	6%	0%	100%
Essex	■ ■	Con hold	60	1	12	0	2	0	75	80%	1%	16%	0%	3%	0%	100%
Gloucestershire	■ ■	Con hold	42	4	13	1	1	2	63	67%	6%	21%	2%	2%	3%	100%
Hampshire	■ ■	Con hold	51	1	25	0	0	1	78	65%	1%	32%	0%	0%	1%	100%
Hertfordshire	■ ■	Con hold	55	3	17	1	0	1	77	71%	4%	22%	1%	0%	1%	100%
Kent	■ ■	Con hold	74	2	7	0	0	1	84	88%	2%	8%	0%	0%	1%	100%
Lancashire	■ ■	Con gain from Lab	51	16	10	2	3	2	84	61%	19%	12%	2%	4%	2%	100%
Leicestershire	■ ■	Con hold	36	4	14	0	0	1	55	65%	7%	25%	0%	0%	2%	100%
Lincolnshire	■ ■	Con hold	60	4	5	0	3	5	77	78%	5%	6%	0%	4%	6%	100%
Norfolk	■ ■	Con hold	60	3	13	7	0	1	84	71%	4%	15%	8%	0%	1%	100%
North Yorkshire	■ ■	Con hold	48	1	11	0	11	1	72	67%	1%	15%	0%	15%	1%	100%
Northamptonshire	■ ■	Con hold	56	6	9	0	2	0	73	77%	8%	12%	0%	3%	0%	100%
Nottinghamshire	■ ■	Con gain from Lab	35	13	9	0	2	8	67	52%	19%	13%	0%	3%	12%	100%
Oxfordshire	■ ■	Con hold	52	9	10	2	1	0	74	70%	12%	14%	3%	1%	0%	100%
Somerset	■ ■	Con gain from LD	35	2	21	0	0	0	58	60%	3%	36%	0%	0%	0%	100%
Staffordshire	■ ■	Con gain from Lab	49	3	4	0	2	4	62	79%	5%	6%	0%	3%	6%	100%
Suffolk	■ ■	Con hold	55	2	11	2	2	3	75	73%	3%	15%	3%	3%	4%	100%
Surrey	■ ■	Con hold	56	1	13	0	1	9	80	70%	1%	16%	0%	1%	11%	100%
Warwickshire	■ ■	Con gain from NOC	39	10	12	0	0	1	62	63%	16%	19%	0%	0%	2%	100%
West Sussex	■ ■	Con hold	48	2	21	0	0	0	71	68%	3%	30%	0%	0%	0%	100%
Worcestershire	■ ■	Con hold	42	3	8	0	0	4	57	74%	5%	14%	0%	0%	7%	100%
Unitary Authorities																
Bedford	■ ■	NOC - no change	9	7	13	0	7	0	36	25%	19%	36%	0%	19%	0%	100%
# Bristol	■ ■	LD gain from NOC	17	16	36	1	0	0	70	24%	23%	51%	1%	0%	0%	100%
Central Bedfordshire	■ ■	Con win (notional hold)	54	0	11	0	1	0	66	82%	0%	17%	0%	2%	0%	100%
Cornwall	■ ■	NOC (Notional LD lose to NOC)	50	0	38	0	32	3	123	41%	0%	31%	0%	26%	2%	100%
Isle of Wight	■ ■	Con hold	24	1	5	0	7	3	40	60%	3%	13%	0%	18%	8%	100%
Shropshire	■ ■	Con win (notional hold)	54	7	11	0	2	0	74	73%	9%	15%	0%	3%	0%	100%
Wiltshire	■ ■	Con win (notional hold)	62	2	24	0	7	3	98	63%	2%	24%	0%	7%	3%	100%

Election type:

one-third

* One seat is vacant due to the death of the Conservative Party candidate, polling is to take place on 16 July 2009.

Source: BBC and Local Government Information online

Local Elections 2009

Council control by party

Including 7 Unitary Authorities

