

Local Government Reorganisation in Devon

Information Pack



Why this matters

Local government reorganisation (or LGR) will shape how Exeter, Plymouth and Devon are governed for decades, and how decisions that affect people's daily lives are made.

This is about unlocking our long-term potential for housing, public services, economic growth and giving communities clearer, more accountable local decision-making.

The choices made through this process will determine where power sits and how locally decisions are made. Getting governance right matters because city-scale challenges need clear leadership, the right capacity, and the ability to act decisively over the long term.

Exeter and Plymouth are growing cities and regional anchors, with distinct roles in Devon's economy, skills base, transport network and public services. Their success, or failure, has consequences well beyond their administrative boundaries, affecting surrounding towns, rural and coastal communities.

This consultation represents the most significant opportunity in more than 50 years for residents and organisations to influence how local governance is designed to meet these challenges.



The Government's consultation

- The Government is running a formal public consultation to inform its decision on LGR in Devon
- The consultation covers all proposals submitted for Devon, including different options for how local government could be structured
- It is designed to gather views, perspectives and evidence from residents, organisations and stakeholders. No decisions have been taken by Ministers at this stage
- Responses will be considered alongside other evidence as Government determines the best way forward
- Anyone can take part, and responses should be made directly through the Government's consultation process.



The options on the table

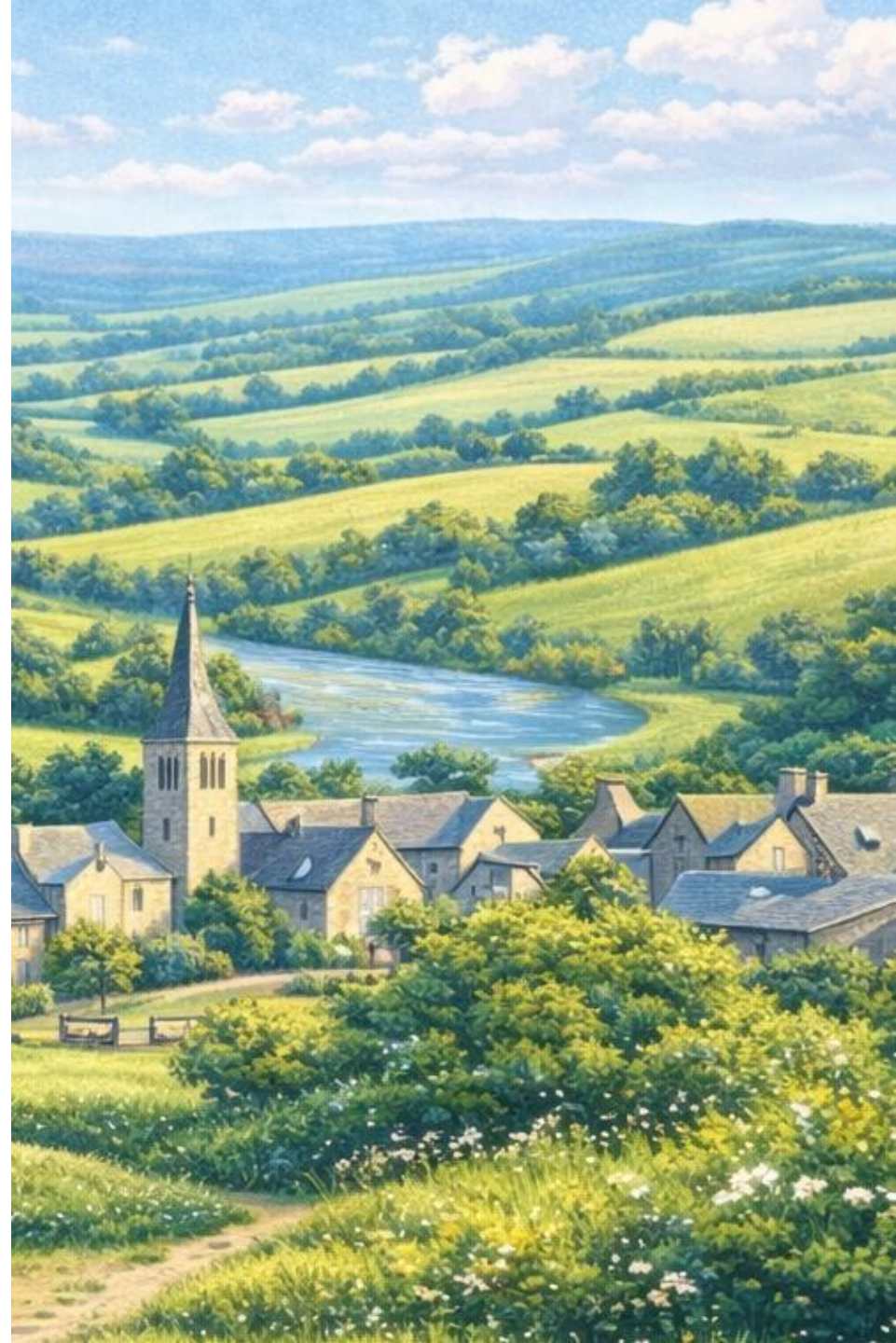
The Government is consulting on a number of different proposals for how local government in Devon could be organised in the future.

More than one proposal on Devon's future has been submitted.

The proposals set out different options for the number, size and geography of potential unitary authorities.

The consultation provides an opportunity to consider the implications of each proposal and to share views on their potential strengths and challenges.

Government will take consultation responses into account alongside other evidence before making a decision in mid-2026.





The Exeter–Plymouth proposal

Under our proposal, Devon would be served by four unitary councils, each with the scale and coherence to deliver high-quality services close to communities:

- **An expanded Plymouth:** Plymouth plus 13 parishes from South Hams, reflecting established travel-to-work and service patterns and providing the scale to drive growth
- **An expanded Exeter:** Exeter plus 49 parishes from Teignbridge, East Devon and Mid Devon, forming a single unitary around one of the UK's fastest-growing cities.
- **An expanded Torbay:** Torbay plus 21 nearby parishes, building on an established integrated authority with a strong service delivery record
- **Devon Coast and Countryside:** A new council specifically designed for rural and coastal communities, tailored to market towns and dispersed populations.

Other proposals are also being consulted on.

See the [Devon consultation hub](#) for details.

Our Exeter–Plymouth proposal

A four-unitary model designed around functional geography, resilient services and long-term value for money.

- **Simpler governance:** Replaces 11 councils with 4 unitaries, aligned to functional geography and how people live, work and travel. Enlarged geographies support better planning and growth
- **Financially viable :** Four balanced authorities would save £400m+ over 10 years and cost £70m over four year. All four authorities are financially viable
- **Stronger services:** Single-tier delivery reduces duplication and supports continuity and reform in special educational needs and disabilities (or SEND), children's and adult social care
- **Growth & investment:** Expanded boundaries strengthens the tax base to support investment in housing, infrastructure and services
- **Devolution-ready:** Four broadly comparable authorities (Plymouth c.301k, Exeter c.256k, Torbay c.220k, Coast & Countryside c.445k) create equal partners within a mayoral strategic authority
- **Local voice :** Parish and town councils retained, with neighbourhood governance review for non-Parished areas and devolved budgets.

Our perspective

We have submitted our proposal, alongside Plymouth City Council, because we believe it offers a credible, sustainable way forward that strengthens local accountability, supports growth and protects services across Devon.

- We are proposing governance that recognises Exeter and Plymouth as distinct city economies and regional hubs, with clear accountability for the decisions that shape housing delivery, infrastructure, public services and long-term investment
- The proposal aims to match governance to functional geography – how people live, work, travel and access services – so decisions can be made closer to the communities they affect, with clearer lines of responsibility
- It is designed to create authorities of sufficient scale to be financially resilient and to sustain key services, while remaining locally focused and responsive
- It supports place-based public service reform, including stronger neighbourhood working and more coherent partnership with the NHS, police and other agencies
- It supports Devon's rural and coastal communities by proposing a structure intended to reflect different types of place, with the ability to design services around urban and rural needs
- We recognise there are trade-offs. Any reorganisation involves transition risk and complexity, and different models will balance simplicity, scale and local identity in different ways. We have sought to put forward a proposal that is realistic to implement and strongest on long-term outcomes.



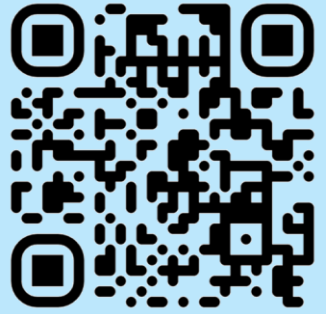
What you may want to consider

Different governance models raise different questions and trade-offs. You may wish to reflect on:

- How clearly accountability sits for decisions on housing, infrastructure and economic growth
- Whether proposed geographies align with how people live, work, travel and access services
- The implications of different models for the sustainability and integration of key public services
- How effectively each option supports place-based working in urban, rural and coastal communities
- The balance between scale, resilience and local responsiveness
- How different approaches might position Devon, Exeter and Plymouth for future devolution and partnership working.

How to take part

Click here or
scan the QR Code



The Government's consultation is open to residents, organisations and stakeholders.

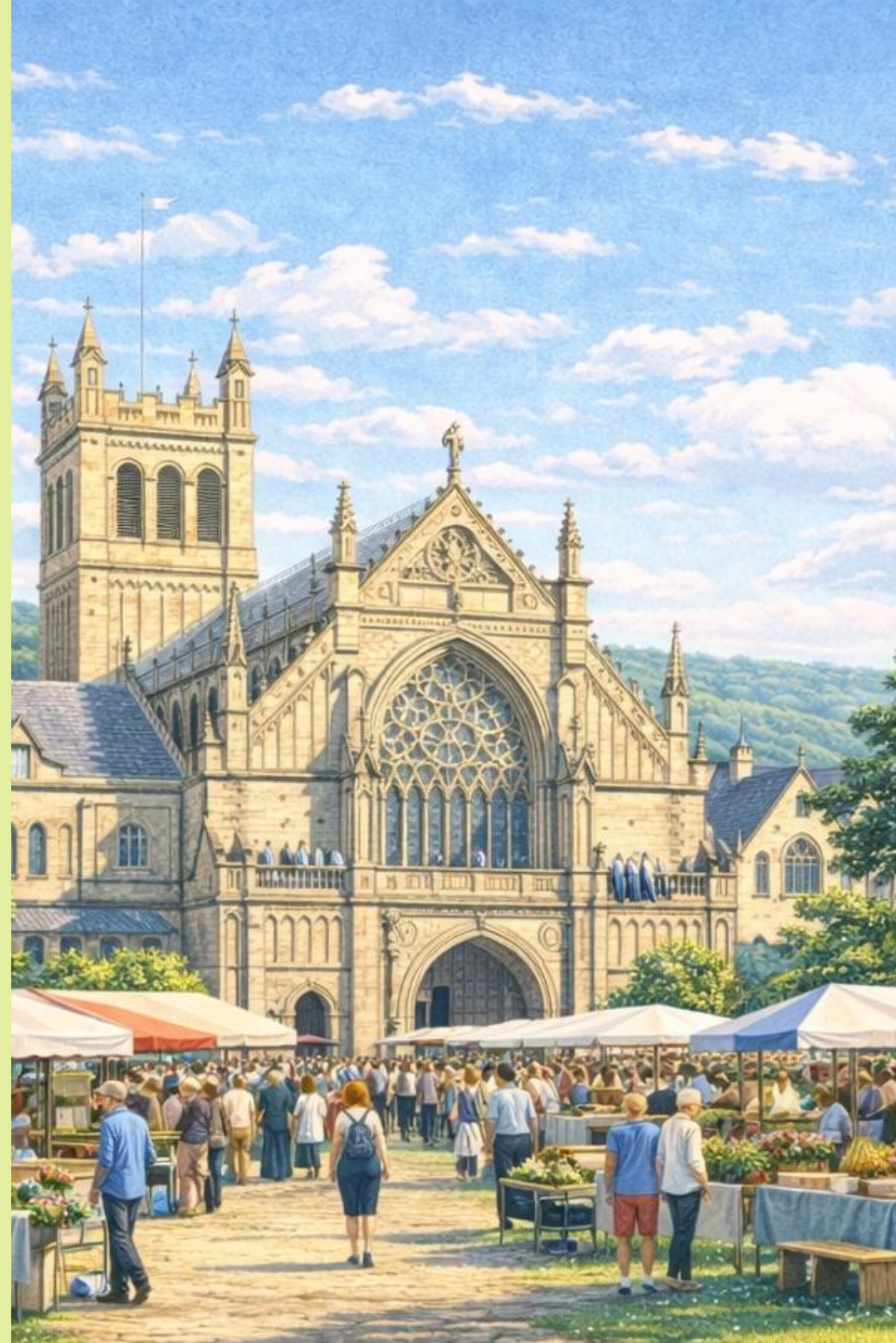
- Full details of the consultation, including how to respond, are available via the Devon LGR portal → [Click here](#)
- The consultation sets out all proposals being considered for Devon and the questions Government is seeking views on
- Responses should be submitted directly to Government through the official consultation process
- The consultation will run for a defined period, closing **11:59pm on 26 March 2026**.
- All responses received within the consultation period will be considered as part of Government's decision-making.



Where to go for more info

Further information about the consultation and the proposals is available online:

- Devon's hub for all consultation options: www.devonlgr.co.uk
- Exeter's LGR website: www.exeter.gov.uk/LGR



Disclaimer and use of this pack

This pack has been prepared to support informed engagement with the Government's consultation on local government reorganisation in Devon.

This material is provided for information only and does not form part of the Government's formal consultation documentation.

The consultation is led by Government, and the final decision on future governance arrangements rests with Ministers.

The pack summarises the consultation process and the proposals submitted, but does not seek to rank, score or promote responses to the consultation.

Views expressed in this pack reflect the perspective of Exeter City Council and Plymouth City Council at the time of publication.

Information is based on material available at the time and may be updated as Government confirms further detail.

Stakeholders are encouraged to review the Government's consultation materials in full and submit views directly through the [official consultation process](#).

This pack should be read alongside, not as a substitute for, the Government's consultation documents.

Accurate as of publication date: February 2026.



Thank you