

# LOCAL GOVERNMENT

**A Handbook for  
Students, Local Government Workers,  
and the Man in the Street**

*Published by the*

**Conservative Central Education Committee  
Palace Chambers  
Westminster**

## CONTENTS

	PAGE
FOREWORD . . . . .	3
THE GROWTH AND IMPORTANCE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT . . . . .	5
RELATIONS BETWEEN LOCAL AUTHORITIES AND THE STATE . . . . .	24
TYPES OF LOCAL AUTHORITIES . . . . .	35
THE POWERS AND DUTIES OF LOCAL AUTHORITIES . . . . .	43
WHAT LOCAL GOVERNMENT COSTS . . . . .	59
THE INDIVIDUAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT . . . . .	69
BIBLIOGRAPHY . . . . .	76

## FOREWORD

OUR system of local government is the oldest of all British institutions. Its roots lie in the far-off days before any central authority existed in England or our national consciousness had dawned. It is the seed from which the principle of self-government has sprung, and its flower is our belief in the virtue of independence and freedom.

Through many hundreds of years it grew side by side with the institution of Parliament, sharing with it the responsibility for the just administration of the country and the improvement of the welfare of the people. Today, though its sphere of action may be more restricted than that of Parliament, its importance is as great, and it looms large in the life of the individual citizen, for it touches his interests in a multitude of ways.

As the quotation at the head of the first chapter of this handbook claims, the citizen's hope of health, happiness and progress depends for its realisation upon local government. Today, as ever, we need men and women willing to give their time, enthusiasm and loyalty in order to provide the vigour and wisdom which this often unexciting, but always essential, work demands. The successful performance of this work carries with it an urgent duty that every citizen should cast his or her vote at every election, and that they should take sufficient interest in the problems before them to enable them to do so wisely.

Realising the vital place which local government occupies among our national institutions, the Conservative Central Education Committee has decided to publish this introduction to the subject—which it has had specially written by a well-known authority—in order to enable the citizen better to understand its value and importance. The Committee hopes that in this way he, or she, may be

encouraged and equipped to take an active part in this field of public service, and in doing so to assist in promoting the security and happiness of the mass of our fellow citizens in Britain today.

R. A. BUTLER.

*Chairman:*

*Conservative Central Education Committee.*

*April, 1938.*