Statement of Common Ground

Fareham Borough Council &

Havant Borough Council

October 2026

FAREHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Havant
BOROUGH COUNCIL

1. Introduction

1.1. This Statement of Common Ground (SCG) is a jointly agreed statement between Fareham Borough Council (GBC) and Havant Borough Council (HBC). It sets out the position and understanding with respect to key cross boundary strategic issues between the two authorities. It is not binding on either party but sets out a clear and positive direction to inform ongoing strategy and plan making. It should be noted that this is a bilateral agreement between these two authorities only.

1.2. HBC intends to submit its emerging Local Plan as a legacy plan[1] which will be examined under the 2024 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), whilst FBC has an up-to-date Local Plan adopted in 2023 and published a notice of intention to commence local plan preparation[2] under the new plan making system[3].

1.3. The Written Ministerial Statement made in November 2025 notes that the new plan-making system provided by the Levelling-Up and Regeneration Act 2023 does not include the Duty to Cooperate. Instead, the new system will rely on revised national policy and the new tier of strategic planning to ensure effective co-operation between plan-making authorities. It also notes that the Regulations for the new system will 'save' the current plan-making system for a period to allow emerging plans, such as the Havant Local Plan, to progress to examination by 31 December 2026.

1.4. Significantly however, the regulations do not 'save' the Duty to Co-operate in relation to planning of sustainable development, set out in Section 33A of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. Although the legislative requirements have removed the Duty to Cooperate as a legal compliance requirement, paragraph 24 of the 2024 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) indicates that local planning authorities continue to be under a duty to cooperate with each other on strategic matters. Maintaining cooperation between plan-making authorities is retained as a plan-making policy in the 2026 NPPF.

1.5. This SCG has been prepared in parallel with the Publication Havant Borough Building a Better Future Plan under Regulation 19 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012) and the Fareham Local Plan 2044. FBC and HBC agree on the importance of continuing to work on strategic cross boundary issues in line with national policy.

[1] To be examined under the 2024 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
[2] https://www.fareham.gov.uk/planning/local_plan/local_plan_notice_commence.aspx
[3] The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2026, Part 4, Regulation 19

2. Strategic Geography

2.1. A map of the two authority areas is set out in figure 1. Havant Borough is located to the east of Fareham Borough, separated by the northern extent of Portsmouth city.

2.2. Fareham is the main town in the Borough. The other main settlements are Western Wards, Portchester, Lower Swanwick, Whiteley, Stubbington and Hill Head, Funtley and Titchfield. The Borough is well connected to the M27 motorway, which is in the north of the Borough and provides access to Southampton, Portsmouth and Havant beyond. Fareham Borough is approximately 30 square miles in size and has a population of approximately 117,000 living in 46,000 households

2.3. The Borough of Havant is located on the coastal plain between the South Downs and the Solent. The authority area comprises approximately 55 square kilometres with a population of 132,006. The borough is made up of five sub areas namely Emsworth, Havant, Hayling Island, Leigh Park and Waterlooville.

2.4. Fareham Borough Council and Havant Borough Council both fall within the Portsmouth Housing Market Area and Functional Economic Market Area in their entirety.

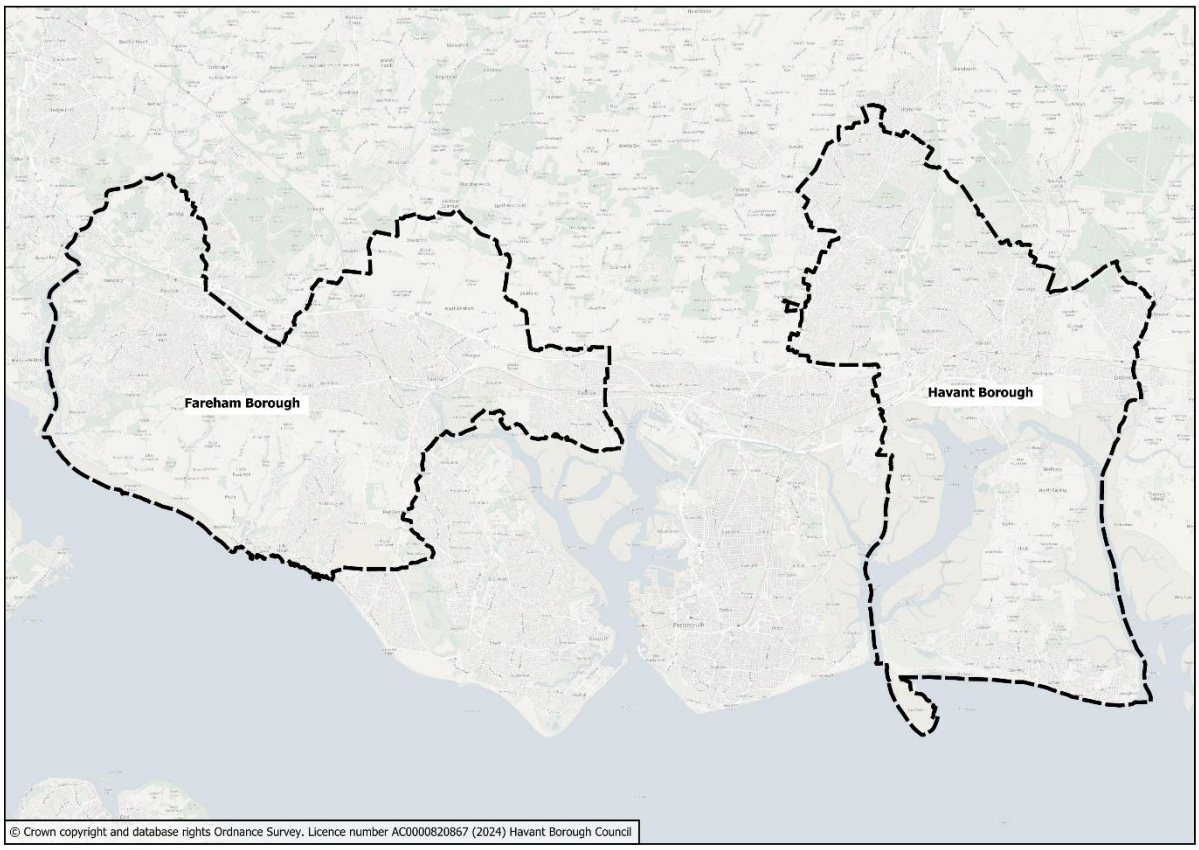

Figure 1: Map of Fareham Borough and Havant Borough

Partnership for South Hampshire and South East Hampshire Joint working

2.5. Fareham Borough Council and Havant Borough Council are active members of the Partnership for South Hampshire (PfSH). It is a partnership of district and unitary authorities, together with Hampshire County Council and the New Forest National Park Authority, working together to support the sustainable growth of the South Hampshire sub-region. A map of the PfSH area is set out in figure 2.



Figure 2: Map of the Partnership for South Hampshire sub-region

2.6. PfSH approved a Spatial Position Statement in December 2023. It sets out strategic principles to guide development. It also sets out the balance between the need and supply of new dwellings across the sub region, identifying a shortfall in supply still to be planned for of 11,771 dwellings to 2036. It recognises that some authorities are at an early stage in plan preparation, and that as part of this plan making work additional sites will be identified to meet unmet needs. The Statement sets out a two stage process to addressing needs, first identifying the authorities which should be able to meet or exceed their needs, and second by identifying broad areas of search for growth to be considered further through local plans.

2.7. Since this Statement was approved, the Government's standard method for calculating housing need has changed from a population based to a housing stock based algorithm, and the affordability ratio has also changed. As a result the housing need figures for the PfSH area as a whole have increased.

2.8. The reintroduction of statutory strategic planning requires the preparation of a Spatial Development Strategy by the Combined Authority for Hampshire and the Solent. A key output of this work will be the distribution of housing requirements over the Plan area. In light of this, PfSH do not intend to update the Spatial Position Statement. However, in the meantime PfSH continue to discuss the latest position to inform the preparation of each authority's local plan to 'maintain effective cooperation' in accordance with the requirements of the NPPF. This is supplemented by the preparation of Statements of Common Ground between individual authorities such as this.

2.9. More recently, the two authorities have also taken part in collective discussions as part of a grouping of South East Hampshire authorities including Portsmouth City and Gosport Borough Councils. This collaborative working between the Borough and City Councils has allowed for the development of an up-to-date picture of the unmet development need situation in South East Hampshire. This has resulted in further agreement between the Authorities to help accommodate outstanding employment land needs as well as agreeing the distribution of the unmet need contribution made in the adopted Fareham Local Plan 2037[4]This is addressed fully in the South East Hampshire Statement of Common Ground. In addition, the South East Hampshire Authorities have agreed to further meetings and collaboration on key environmental issues including green infrastructure and biodiversity net gain.

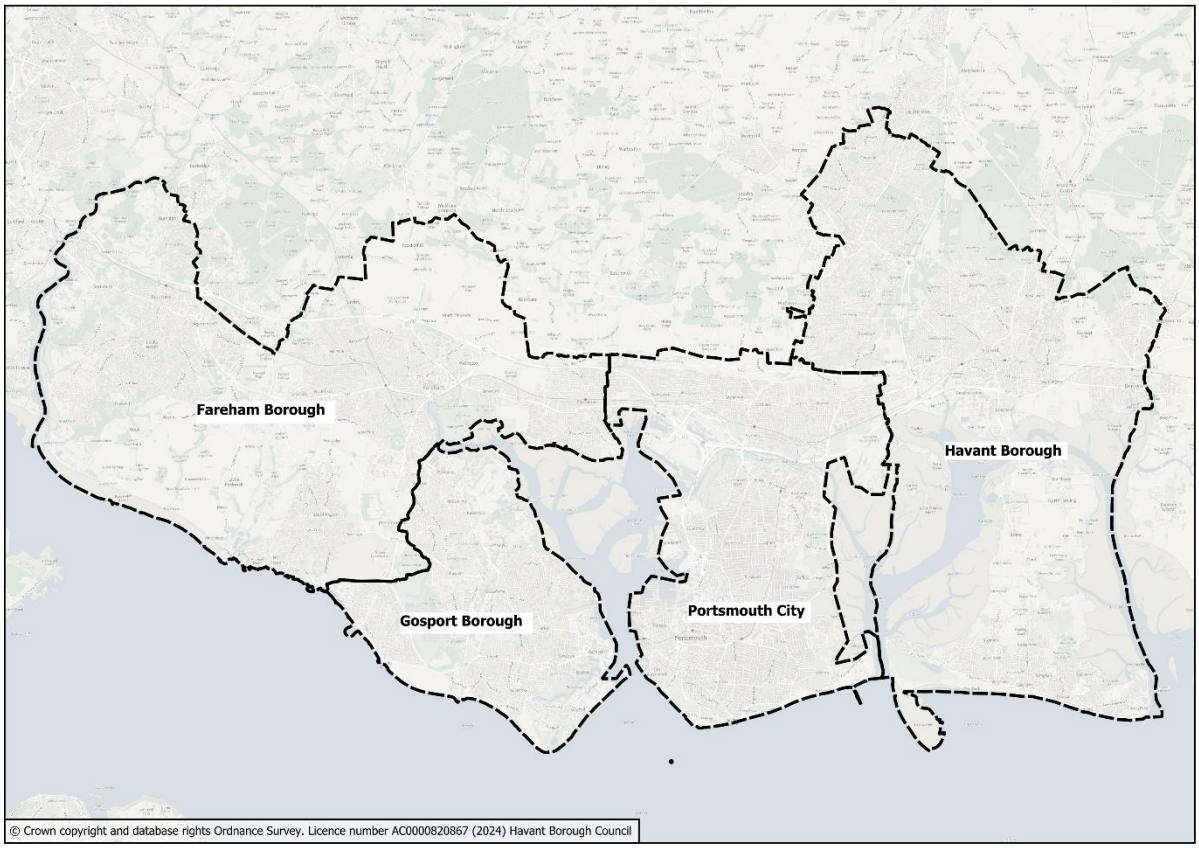

Figure 3: Map of South East Hampshire Authorities

[4] 800 dwellings was committed to Portsmouth City Council in the Fareham Local Plan with a further 100 to wider south Hampshire need.

3. Key Cross boundary Strategic Matters

3.1. This section sets out where agreement has been reached on cross-border strategic matters, or where further work to reach common ground is required.

Housing

Fareham Borough Council's Position

3.2. Fareham recognises the total combined unmet need figure for the three authorities (GBC, HBC and PCC) of 18,347 homes against the 2024 Standard methodology[5] and acknowledges how this differs from numbers previously identified by the Partnership for South Hampshire (PfSH). FBC has also considered the various methodologies used in assessing the availability of land including in Havant Borough and has endorsed conclusions as far as leaving 'no stone unturned' is considered.

3.3. The Fareham Local Plan 2037 was adopted in April 2023 and represents one of the few up-to-date Local Plans in Hampshire. It is also the only adopted plan locally, aside from Winchester that includes a commitment towards unmet need. The Plan allocates a total of 900 dwellings towards PfSH unmet need, 800 of which are specifically allocated (within the Plan wording) to Portsmouth. The remaining 100 dwellings is towards wider unmet needs in the area. The three authorities (GBC, HBC and PCC) have met to discuss how the 100 dwellings are apportioned between them. It has subsequently been agreed that these should be apportioned to GBC which has been formalised as a multi-lateral Statement of Common Ground between the South East Hampshire authorities.

3.4. With regards to making a further contribution to housing unmet need, FBC is currently unable to commit to anything further at this stage. FBC' has commenced progress on a new Local Plan which is being undertaken under the new plan making system.

Havant Borough Council's Position

3.5. HBC concluded its regulation 19 Local Plan on 9 September 2026, and aiming for submission in November 2026.

3.6. The Publication Havant Borough Building a Better Future Plan makes provision for at least 7,087 new dwellings for the plan period (2022 to 2043), averaging 337 dwellings per annum. However, as of 1 April 2025, there remains a supply of 5,908 new dwellings remaining to be delivered by the Plan (excluding completions which took place 2022/23 to 2024/25). This reflects the re-basing of the start of the plan period to 2022, and the monitoring data which has a base date of 1 April 2025. On this basis, there is an unmet need arising from Havant Borough of 9,914 homes based on a plan period of 2022/23-2042/43. This reduces to 9,569 dwellings when taking the unmet need allowance of 345 dwellings from the Winchester District Local Plan 2020-2040 into account.

[5] As of October 2025 – set out in Appendix 2 of the South East Hampshire Statement of Common Ground (March 2026)

3.7. Given the scale of unmet housing need that exists, in addition to engaging with its neighbouring authorities, the Borough has also engaged with other authorities in the Hampshire and the Solent Combined County Authority area. The Council's Statement of Cooperation[6] documents this and shows that it has not been practicable to secure any further commitments towards unmet housing need at this time.

3.8. The Borough Council also continues to work proactively with Gosport Borough and Portsmouth City Councils as part of the South East Hampshire group as set out above.

Agreed Position

3.9. The two authorities note the respective positions on housing need and supply.

3.10. HBC is unable to meet the housing need established through the standard method, resulting in a substantial amount of unmet housing need. It is agreed that HBC has left no stone unturned in order to meet housing need as far as possible in providing sustainable development.

3.11. The adopted Fareham Local Plan Review makes an allowance of 900 dwellings towards PfSH unmet need which are already committed to other authorities. It is acknowledged that FBC is in the early stages of its new Local Plan and is not yet in a position to commit to any further contribution towards unmet housing need at this time.

3.12. Both authorities will continue to work with PfSH partners and the grouping of South East Hampshire authorities on strategic cross boundary issues.

Employment

Havant Borough Council's Position

3.13. The Council's Employment Land Review (ELR) 2024 and the ELR Addendum 2026 provide a robust assessment of the Borough's economic and employment development needs. It identifies an objectively assessed need figure of 146,213 sq. m of net new industrial floorspace over the plan period, which can be met by a small margin.

3.14. However, there is a lack of office sites promoted for development. The ELR notes that the office market has been challenging for a number of years and that developers are unwilling to invest speculatively in securing land allocations when they do not see a reasonable short-term development opportunity. As such, given the current market weakness and limited viability, any new office development would be in the middle to the end of the plan period. There has been no promotion of land for office development as part of the Plan's preparation and so there are no available

[6] https://www.havant.gov.uk/media/11096/download?inline

sites for future office development. Due to the lack of available sites for office development in the Borough, the ELR acknowledges that it may be better to work with neighbouring authorities to address office need.

3.15. The Council has proactively engaged with its neighbouring and nearby authorities, both on a bi-lateral and multi-lateral basis with Portsmouth City, Fareham Borough and Gosport Borough being all located within the Portsmouth-focused Functional Economic Market Area (FEMA). This work has proved very productive and has resulted in formal offers of assistance from Portsmouth City Council (22,743 sqm of office) and FBC (19,973 sqm of flexible employment floorspace). The former of which has been formalised as a bilateral SCG between PCC and HBC.

Fareham Borough Council's Position

3.16. The employment floorspace requirement identified in E1 of the Fareham Local Plan 2037 is derived from the PfSH Economic, Employment and Commercial Needs (including logistics) Study which was prepared by Stantec. Based on a pro-rata adjustment to ensure the requirement is aligned with the plan period; the adopted Fareham Local Plan 2037 identifies an employment floorspace requirement across the Plan period of 121,964 square metres of employment floorspace. The Local Plan allocated seven new sites to meet this requirement, two of these sites (Faraday and Swordfish) form the strategic site at Daedalus. These seven sites are in addition to the strategic site at Welborne (allocated through The Welborne Plan). Between them, Welborne and Daedalus contribute 77% of the anticipated supply.

3.17. At point of adoption, the plan identified a supply of 241,754 square metres of employment floorspace, an excess of 119,790 square metres compared to the requirement. The Inspector at the Local Plan examination recognised the value and importance of the two strategic sites and welcomed the inclusion of the additional sites to facilitate some flexibility and choice in the local market. To maximise flexibility the Local Plan does not allocate these sites for a particular use class, rather all employment allocations are for mixed employment use. Fareham Borough Council is willing to commit 19,973 square metres of its flexible employment floorspace towards Havant Borough Council’s unmet need.

Agreed Position

3.18. FBC has agreed to provide a total of 19,973 sq. m of employment floor space towards HBC’s unmet employment needs. As FBC’s local plan is adopted, the Council cannot include any wording within the current Plan, but this commitment is formalised through this Statement. HBC would also support any reference towards this commitment in FBC’s new Local Plan 2044. This reflects the Borough Council’s letter to Gosport Borough Council, Havant Borough Council and Portsmouth City Council dated 26 November 2025 which offered 19,973 square metres of employment floorspace to address unmet needs in Havant Borough.

3.19. FBC was consulted on the proposed modifications to Policy 7: Amount of Employment in the Publication Building a Better Future Plan in light of recent

changes to PCC's employment land supply and is content that this would improve the soundness and clarity of the Plan.

3.20. With a separate transfer of employment land from PCC to HBC, there remains no unmet employment need arising out of Havant Borough. This is set out in the South East Hampshire Statement of Common Ground.

Environment

Agreed Position

3.21. The two authorities will continue to work positively together as part of wider sub regional partnership work including nutrient neutrality and biodiversity net gain through the Solent Mitigation Partnership and recreational disturbance through Bird Aware.

4. Signatories

4.1. Both parties agree that this statement is an accurate representation of matters discussed and issues agreed upon.

4.2. Both parties agree that they have engaged positively on an ongoing basis both bilaterally and multilaterally through the Partnership for South Hampshire and group of South East Hampshire Authorities.

	Signed: [redacted]	Signed: [redacted]
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	Position: Head of Planning	Position: Strategic Planning Manager
	Fareham Borough Council	Havant Borough Council
	Date: 27/10/2026	Date: 23/10/2026