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By e-mail

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Dear Adam,

Request for East Hampshire District Council to consider taking Gosport's Unmet Housing Need

Thank you for meeting us on the 6th June 2025 in relation to our ongoing Duty to Cooperate arrangements. I have attached a copy of the slides we presented at the meeting for your information and as you will recall we have previously agreed a set of notes and outcomes for this particular meeting.

The purpose of this letter is to formally update you on the progress of Gosport Borough's Local Plan, and its housing need and supply position as well as representing the Council's formal request to ask whether East Hampshire District Council can consider taking any of Gosport Borough's unmet housing need which is set out later in this letter.

Sub-regional cooperation

Gosport Borough Council has worked very closely and collaboratively with the authorities that comprise the Partnership for South Hampshire (PfSH) including the work that led to the production of the PfSH Spatial Position Statement (SPS), approved by PfSH Joint Committee on 6th December 2023.

PfSH has provided a framework for sub-regional planning since the production of the South East Plan (adopted May 2009). It has also been successful on a number of cross-boundary environmental initiatives including finding effective measures to address the issues of recreational disturbance and nutrient pollution on internationally important habitats in order that authorities can keep granting planning permission for new dwellings.

Local Plan timetable

In relation to Gosport Borough's Local Plan, we recently published an updated Local Development Scheme (LDS) which indicates that we will be publishing a Regulation 19 Local Plan in early 2026. The LDS can be viewed here: [Local Development Scheme \(LDS\) - Gosport Borough Council](#)

The timing of our request regarding unmet need

It is recognised that our councils have worked collaboratively, constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis during the preparation of each other's Local Plans, largely through PfSH.

As you will be aware there has been a period of uncertainty with a number of actual and proposed changes published regarding the calculation of housing need for each local authority area and whether it will be discretionary or mandatory and whether there would be particular exceptions to this. Following the Government's publication of the latest National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and associated documents in December 2024, the Council is in a clearer position of its latest local housing need, that it is again mandatory, and how the Council should consider its unmet housing need.

In addition, following a recent Inspector's Advisory Meeting regarding our emerging Local Plan it became clear that we needed to undertake further work with the local authorities that make up the Portsmouth Housing Market Area (HMA), particularly as there have been a number of changes to the Standard Method for calculating local housing need since the SPS was approved. We have now met with all five other authorities that make up the HMA to discuss cross-boundary issues.

Housing Need and Supply

As we discussed at the meeting, the housing need for each local authority in South Hampshire has significantly increased, except for Southampton. Gosport's Standard Method has increased from 339 dwellings per annum to **434 dwellings per annum** (a 28% increase). As the slides indicate this level has only been achieved four times in the last 42 years due to two major site releases available at the same time (see slide 14). Our current adopted Local Plan includes a figure of 170 dpa and we are anticipating a slightly lower figure going forward with our emerging Local Plan due to limited site availability.

As slide 12 indicates our current supply is 2,538 which means that over the plan period to 2042 the Borough would have an unmet need of just over 4,800 dwellings.

Gosport Borough Council has an established history of being pro-growth and is now a largely dense urban area. The Council has one of the highest rates of granting planning permissions in England.

Slide 18 of the attached presentation indicates the urban character of the Borough, brownfield opportunities, and the restrictions on any non-urban areas such as operational MoD establishments or a Site of Special Scientific Interest.

The Council has taken a no-stone-unturned approach and has undertaken four 'call for sites' including enabling landowners/developers and other interested parties to submit sites at any time through the preparation of the Local Plan. The Council's Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) is currently being refreshed for the Reg

19 consultation with the previous version available to view on the Council's website¹. As identified on our slides a number of sites are no longer available for residential as the landowners have alternative plans (such as Gosport Police Station, Immigration Removal Centre). A smaller number of additional sites have become available (see slide 26).

The Borough has particular deliverability and viability issues with a number of its key sites. Over the past twenty years the Council has successfully facilitated development on a number of complex former MoD sites, a number of which are still ongoing (e.g. the former HMS Daedalus and Royal Hospital Haslar sites). Many of the sites have a complex mix of issues including: contaminated land; a lack of investment by Government agencies in infrastructure including sea defences; ongoing flood management issues; significant heritage assets that have been left in a deteriorating condition; limited transport options; and relatively low gross development values. All these issues have affected the speed of delivery of past and current sites and continue to impact on ascertaining whether current brownfield releases are deliverable. This also poses challenges for securing affordable housing and developer contributions.

As a consequence of the above matters it has been made clear that we need to formally request all the local authorities in the Portsmouth HMA to consider whether they are able to take our identified unmet housing need which as outlined above is just over 4,800 dwellings.

As discussed recently, the duty to cooperate meetings and this formal letter are part of an ongoing process and consequently we would be happy to discuss the matter on a regular basis with East Hampshire DC and the other local authorities in the HMA.

I would therefore be grateful for a response to our request for East Hampshire DC to consider taking our unmet need by 12th September 2025 in order that you are able to give this matter due consideration. If further time is required please let me know. It is also understood that you may not be in a position to fully understand your own housing supply given the changes made to the Standard Method in December 2024 and therefore it may be appropriate to provide a provisional position.

Thank you for your cooperation on this matter and if in the meantime you require any further clarification please do not hesitate to contact me. Please note that we may share your response as part of our evidence base.

Yours sincerely,



Jayson

Jayson Grygiel
Manager of Planning Policy
Gosport Borough Council

¹ [Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment](#)