Appendix A

Business Plan 2026

Local authorities working together

for a better future for South Hampshire

Spring 2026

Partnership for South Hampshire (PfSH) Business Plan 2021-2025

About us

The Partnership for South Hampshire (PfSH) brings together local authorities around the Solent to coordinate sustainable, long-term growth for the sub-region of Hampshire. It provides a democratic forum for leaders to address issues that cross council boundaries and to take coordinated action on shared priorities including housing delivery, environmental protection and climate change.

Originally formed to support regeneration in the core urban areas of Portsmouth and Southampton, PfSH now reflects the strong functional links between the cities, surrounding towns, and rural hinterland. Its collaborative approach helps members balance housing needs with environmental responsibilities, economic development, and the protection of the area's unique natural assets.

This Business Plan comes at a time of change, as local government structures are reorganised and a Mayoral Combined County Authority for Hampshire and the Solent is set up. Whatever changes lie ahead, our members agree that the experience and coordination PfSH brings should remain part of any new arrangements **in whatever guise**

PfSH continues to be a relevant mechanism for joint working. Its established partnerships, shared evidence base and successful track record in cross-boundary planning continue to provide strong foundations for coordinated decision-making in any future arrangements. Our member local authorities agree it is essential that PfSH's role and collaborative strengths are carried forward into the new structures created because of local government reorganisation and devolution.

Our Vision for South Hampshire

Vision

The lives of people living in South Hampshire are enhanced through a sustainable approach to housing development and related infrastructure, through a shared approach to tackling climate change and through a thriving cultural and creative offering

Statement of Purpose

To enable our members to speak with one voice. To take coordinated action to provide sustainable housing development, support initiatives that improve our environment and green growth, and help to facilitate cultural and creative industry

We believe working closely together gives us a stronger voice to influence decisions for the benefit of South Hampshire. By sharing the same values and priorities, our partnership makes the most of our strengths and what we have in common.

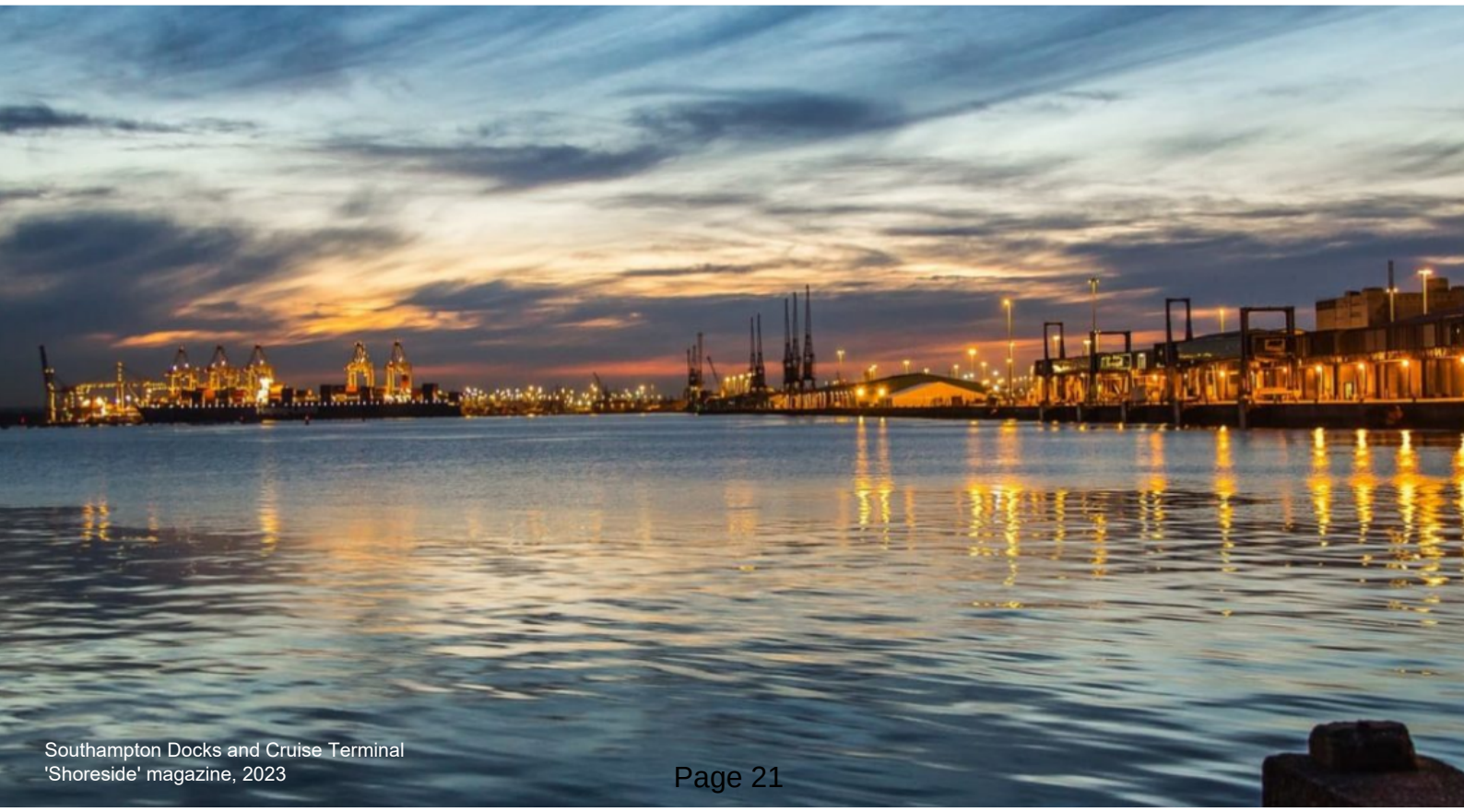
PfSH's original purpose was to facilitate the regeneration of the cities of Portsmouth and Southampton, tackling challenges like low economic growth and poor infrastructure. As we've grown, we now include neighbouring towns and rural areas, recognising how closely linked our communities are.

Through our Joint Committee, we are committed to providing the homes our communities need, while protecting the environment and addressing climate change. Many of our members have declared climate emergencies, and we work hard to ensure new development is sustainable.

PfSH-led organisations such as the Solent Mitigation Partnership, Bird Aware Solent and support for the Greenprint initiative play a crucial role in enabling growth that respects and protects our internationally important wildlife sites. By working proactively to manage and mitigate the impacts of new development on local habitats—especially for protected bird species—these partnerships ensure that South Hampshire's expansion is not only sustainable, but also maintains the area's rich natural heritage for future generations.

In 2026, we are pleased that Solent Forum has chosen to under the PfSH umbrella. The Forum's expertise in coastal and marine matters will further enhance our ability to take a joined-up approach to planning and environmental stewardship across the Solent, supporting our vision for balanced and sustainable growth.

Recent changes in national planning policy make it more important than ever for local councils to work together to deliver sustainable housing and infrastructure. Our goal is to support growth that lifts people out of poverty and ensures a good quality of life for everyone, while also safeguarding our natural environment.



Southampton Docks and Cruise Terminal
'Shoreside' magazine, 2023

Our Objectives

We will deliver our vision the objectives by:

1. Providing Democratic Leadership

Through its formal Joint Committee, PfSH provides a recognised and transparent forum for democratic debate on issues affecting the sub-region, ensuring clear democratic legitimacy for decisions taken at a South Hampshire level. This structure complements the decision-making responsibilities of individual local authorities while creating space for shared strategic thinking on matters that impact the wider area. Following the anticipated local government reorganisation for Hampshire and the Solent after March 2028, PfSH will also be well-placed to offer a continued platform for democratic leadership and a collective voice for South Hampshire within the evolving governance landscape, ensuring that the interests of the sub-region are effectively represented as part of any wider combined authority arrangements. However, we recognise that this will need to be constantly reviewed over the coming months.

- As Hampshire and the Solent prepare for changes to local government, our aim is to provide strong local leadership that is democratically accountable. We will work with our communities and partners to shape a shared vision for South Hampshire and plan for the area's future.
- Through the mechanisms in place, continue to provide the means to seek collective agreement and decision making across the membership in an accountable and transparent way.

2. Be a voice for South Hampshire

PfSH is part of a group of key strategic organisations (with the Solent Growth Partnership, Solent Freeport, Solent Transport) that manage significant policy agendas in the sub-region. Collectively we need to work better together to ensure the most is made of the opportunities that come from devolution for Hampshire. There is a large infrastructure deficit in the South Hampshire area. We need to do more to understand the deficiencies and the impact that is having on growth - using evidence to help the new mayoral combined authority secure the funding and investment that is needed.

- Collectively, our membership has a more powerful voice - if it 'speaks with one voice' on issues that cross our local authority boundaries. We will continue to undertake joint lobbying of central government, its agencies, MPs, new combined authority structures, our partners and stakeholders to influence policy that is right for South Hampshire. This will include responding to consultations and bidding for funding opportunities as appropriate.
- Work with our partners to lobby on behalf of the South Hampshire area, and influence local agencies so that together we can achieve PfSH's vision.
- Continue to support the activity of other regional bodies such as the Solent Growth Partnership, Creative Network South and Solent Transport
- Publicise the work that our partnership is considering - to assist in providing information for the public.

3. Ensure sustainable development in South Hampshire

There is a need to provide significant numbers of new houses in the area for our local communities, but this should be done sensitively - in a way that is not detrimental to our environment now or in the future. PfSH will also continue to work with government agencies to ensure that the need for development meets environmental requirements - including those undertaken by organisations such as utility companies.

PfSH brings partners together at both political and managerial levels to streamline relationships and support more coherent joint working across South Hampshire. As new governance structures emerge through local government reorganisation and devolution for Hampshire and the Solent, PfSH can act as a practical framework for aligning interests, reducing complexity, and helping shape the collaborative arrangements that follow. It also continues to provide a clear and accessible mechanism for external organisations to engage with local democratic processes across the sub-region, ensuring that evolving structures remain connected, inclusive, and responsive.

Bird Aware Solent

- Continue to provide the governance structure for Bird Aware Solent (Solent Recreation Mitigation Partnership). Bird Aware Solent supports the recreational mitigation in place to support coastal housing.
- Maintain and grow the remit of the Bird Aware Solent in line with the outcomes of its five-year monitoring review and 2024 strategy. Adapt the delivery of Bird Aware's functions in line with overarching government environmental mitigation policy for new housing development.

PfSH Spatial Position Statement 2023 and Solent Mitigation Partnership

- Continue to monitor the PfSH Spatial Position Statement 2023 and assess housing need to inform local plan making and meet the local planning authority duty to cooperate
- In the context of the creation of a mayoral combined authority, engage and participate with Hampshire local authorities and emerging structures in the work required to produce a wider spatial framework for Hampshire and the Solent
- Provide the planning and environmental policy input to sub-regional leadership organisations alongside the Solent Growth Partnership and Solent Transport.
- Working with others helps us understand the infrastructure needed to support growth, and to secure the necessary enhancements to infrastructure (transport, energy, flood protection, air quality, water supply and waste-water treatment, social and community facilities, and green infrastructure)
- Through local planning authorities, encourage conditional, managed growth through the adoption of a 'plan, monitor and manage' approach to land release and local plan review - with development conditional on timely and adequate infrastructure
- Through the Solent Mitigation Partnership, continue to support, develop and implement nutrient mitigation opportunities to facilitate sustainable housing growth.
- Through the Solent Mitigation Partnership, provide assistance that helps member local authorities to monitor their obligations to meet biodiversity net gain targets for new development
- Through the Solent Mitigation Partnership, maintain and grow the provision of nutrient mitigation and bio-diversity net gain opportunities. This will support sustainable new housing and improvements to our natural and built environments

Through our objectives we want to:

- facilitate a balanced approach to development, with economic, social and environmental sustainability at its heart. With the creation of a new mayoral combined authority in coming years, a Hampshire and the Solent wide spatial strategy be required. The existing governance and mechanisms that PfSH has in place to undertake this work can provide a basis for informing this work, by bringing together all, or a number, of the unitary authorities created as part of local government reorganisation in Hampshire and the Solent.
- adopt an evidence base to support a strong policy protection for strategic gaps, designated nature conservation and protected landscapes, and areas of high-quality built environment.
- work together with our members to form an evidence base to support our members' local plans.
- achieve the highest environmental standards for new development - particularly in terms of resource conservation and reduction of environmental impact. This will be achieved by the applying consistent standards and policy approaches in partner authorities' local development documents.

4. Support the growth of the cultural and creative industries

Promote access and participation in a wide range of cultural activities while at the same developing an environment in which cultural and creative industries can thrive. These Industries are significant drivers of the economy and contribute to quality of place and enrich people's lives. In addition, they help to ensure that new developments conform to high standards of design so as to increase liveability in the sub-region, at the same time contributing to growth in tourism and the visitor economy.

Creative Industries

- Support the approaches to growing the creative economy in partnership with the Hampshire Chamber of Commerce, Creative Network South, Solent Growth Partnership, local businesses, universities and others
- Support the various strands comprising the creative industries to better join up by taking part in a review to explore the appetite for establishing an infrastructure body to represent them
- Support the growth and development of a South Hampshire film location agency by providing strategic oversight alongside other partners such as the Solent Growth partnership
- Support Creative Network South as a sector led organisation - articulating the needs of the creative sector in South Hampshire. Review and facilitate the need for the establishment of a new approach to the development of the sector
- Support the creative industries business support programme and take part in any review of how business support can be resourced and delivered in the wider South Hampshire area in the future

Design and the Built Environment

- Facilitate knowledge exchange development of good design practice in the built environment by sustaining the quality place practitioner group - led by design managers from South Hampshire planning authorities
- Promote good quality urban design through the production of design bulletins and hold a design awards, if necessary, holding it in conjunction with an existing award ceremony
- To support the delivery of the biannual Solent Quality Place Awards to celebrate good practice
- Publish and update design guidance to inform developers and planning officers of good design practice in the built environment

Through our objectives we want to:

- contribute to creating an environment that encourages the cultural and creative industries that help to drive the local economy - and as contributors to quality of place.
- facilitate a range of cultural and sporting activities for residents and visitors.
- enhance the tourism offering and see growth in the visitor economy.
- Help to develop high standards of design to increase the liveability of South Hampshire.
- promote excellent cultural facilities which are of national, international or regional repute. These provide a building block not only for the successful integration of culture into our communities, but also for South Hampshire's worldwide 'brand'.
- promote good design. This will be at the top of our agenda to create a sense of place in every new development and regenerated community.
- ensure we do all we can to encourage involvement and participation in culture, sport and recreation.
- enhance quality of life through a diverse and vibrant cultural and sporting offer, using culture and heritage to create a sense of identity and distinctiveness.
- see a thriving creative businesses sector and a healthy visitor economy.

5. Support green infrastructure and green growth

Getting the right community infrastructure in place—both for regenerating existing areas and supporting new neighbourhoods—is essential for attracting investment and delivering services effectively. Climate change also poses significant challenges to the long-term resilience of this infrastructure. South Hampshire benefits from rich environmental, economic, historical and cultural assets. Because of this, one of PfSH's key priorities is to manage growth in a way that protects and enhances these assets while ensuring development is environmentally sustainable.

- Continue to support the Greenprint for South Hampshire initiative and examine ways to facilitate the implementation of its framework for delivery
- Continue to support and grow the Solent Mitigation Partnership in a way that enables PfSH members to jointly and proactively participate in environmental policy and planning
- Engage with other agencies to understand how PfSH can support the Government's 25 Year Environment Plan
- Protect existing open space and habitats and recognise the role of assets beyond the boundary of PfSH as outlined in the Spatial Position Statement 2023
- Support The Solent Forum following its agreement with Southampton City Council that it assumes hosting and accountable body responsibilities as a member of PfSH
- Continue to support and monitor the work of the Solent Waders and Brent Goose Strategy and its relevance to PfSH local planning authorities.

Through our objectives, we aim to:

- Set high environmental standards for new development, focusing on conserving resources and reducing environmental impact. We will do this by applying consistent policies and standards across all partner authorities within the PfSH area.
- Work together to tackle climate change, ensuring that South Hampshire plays its part in supporting national and international efforts to address this global challenge.
- Improve green spaces and promote high-quality design in our built environment, helping to enhance the local landscape, support quality of life, and encourage the renewal of our towns and cities.

Members of the Partnership for South Hampshire Joint Committee (July 2025)

- Cllr Keith House (Eastleigh Borough Council) (Chair)
- Cllr Simon Martin (Fareham Borough Council)
- Cllr Robert Hylands (Gosport Borough Council)
- Cllr Nick Adams-King (Hampshire County Council)
- Cllr Philippa Gray (Havant Borough Council)
- Cllr Derek Tipp (New Forest District Council)
- David Bence (New Forest National Park Authority)
- Cllr Steve Pitt (Portsmouth City Council)
- Cllr Simon Letts (Southampton City Council)
- Cllr Philip Bundy (Test Valley Borough Council)
- Cllr Martin Tod (Winchester City Council)