

**COOPERATION STATEMENT
SWINDON BOROUGH COUNCIL
SUPPORTING THE SWINDON LOCAL PLAN 2043**

September 2026



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1. Introduction

1.1. Purpose of this Statement of Cooperation

- 1.1.1. This Statement of Cooperation sets out how Swindon Borough Council has engaged with neighbouring authorities and relevant bodies during the preparation of the Swindon Local Plan 2043. It identifies the strategic cross-boundary matters that extend beyond the Borough's administrative area, outlines the cooperation undertaken to address them and the positions reached as a result of that engagement.
- 1.1.2. This statement is published to accompany the Regulation 19 (Publication Draft) and will be updated as necessary prior to and following submission of the Plan for independent examination. Once agreed, this document should be read alongside the Statement of Common Ground (SOCGs) prepared with individual authorities and relevant bodies.

1.2. Swindon's Local Plan review timeline

- 1.2.1. Swindon Borough Council is progressing the preparation of its new Local Plan which, following adoption will replace the Swindon Borough Local Plan 2026. The emerging Swindon Local Plan 2043 will form a key part of the development plan for the Borough, setting out the strategy and policy framework to guide development and growth over a twenty-year period.
- 1.2.2. The Regulation 18 consultation was undertaken between 1 September and 13 October 2025, providing residents, stakeholders and statutory consultees the opportunity to comment on the emerging plan.
- 1.2.3. The Local Plan has now been published for its Regulation 19 Publication Period. During this period; Swindon Borough Council invites formal representations on the soundness and legal compliance of the Plan prior to its submission for independent examination.
- 1.2.4. The Council intends to submit the Plan to the Secretary of State under Regulation 22 in December 2026, after which it will be subject to independent examination.
- 1.2.5. Subject to a successful examination process, adoption of the New Local Plan is anticipated in early 2028.

1.3. Legislative and Policy Context

- 1.3.1. The Swindon Local Plan 2043 is being prepared under the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (the "2012 Regulations"), as saved by the Levelling-up and Regulation Act 2023 (Commencement No.11

and Saving Transitional Provisions) Regulations 2026 (the “2026 Commencement and Saving Provisions”).

- 1.3.2. The Duty to Cooperate was a statutory legal requirement, introduced through the Localism Act 2011 and given legal force through Section 33A of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. It required local planning authorities, county councils and relevant bodies to engage effectively on an ongoing basis in relation to strategic cross-boundary matters. In a letter issued on 27 November 2025, the Minister for Housing and Planning confirmed that the Duty to Cooperate was not to be saved for plans progressing in the legacy plan-making system when the new-plan making regulations came into force. The 2026 Commencement and Saving Provisions did not save Section 33A of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act. Consequently, the Duty to Cooperate was withdrawn for plans progressing in the legacy plan-making system from 25 March 2026.
- 1.3.3. While the legal duty has been removed, maintaining effective cooperation is still important for plan-making, as per the NPPF. In particular, paragraphs 24 to 28 of the NPPF require strategic policy-making authorities to engage and collaborate on an ongoing basis with neighbouring authorities and relevant bodies. The NPPF requires plans to ensure that:
 - a) a consistent approach is taken to planning the delivery of major infrastructure including transport, utilities, waste, minerals, environmental improvement and resilience, and strategic healthy, education and other social infrastructure;
 - b) unmet development needs from neighbouring areas are provided for in accordance with paragraph 11b; and
 - c) any allocation or designation which cuts across the boundary of plan areas, or has significant implications for neighbouring areas, is appropriately managed by all relevant authorities.
- 1.3.4. There is further practical guidance in the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG).

1.4. Relationship with Statements of Common Ground

- 1.4.1. As set out in Paragraph 28 of the NPPF there is a requirement for strategic policy-making authorities to prepare and maintain one or more statements of common ground which document the cross-boundary matters being addressed and progress in cooperating to address these.
- 1.4.2. As part of the preparation of the new Local Plan, the Council has prepared Statements of Common Ground (SOCGs) with neighbouring local planning authorities to demonstrate the undertaking of effective and on-going cooperation.
- 1.4.3. The Council intends to update these SOCGs where necessary following Regulation 19 publication and consultation for submission stage to assist the Planning Inspector.

1.4.4. The following tables sets out the progress and status of the Council's Statements of Common Ground with neighbouring authorities and relevant bodies at the Regulation 19 stage.

Neighbouring authority	Status
Wiltshire Council	In preparation
Cotswold District Council	In preparation
Vale of White Horse District Council	In preparation
Oxfordshire County Council	In preparation
West Berkshire District Council	In preparation
Gloucestershire County Council	In preparation

Relevant Body	Status
Environment Agency	In preparation
National Highways	In preparation
Natural England	In preparation
Network Rail/Great Western Railway	In preparation

2. Cross-Boundary Strategic Matters

2.1. Swindon's Geographic and Strategic Context

2.1.1. Swindon is located in north-east Wiltshire, positioned along the M4 corridor between London and Bristol. The borough shares administrative boundaries with the following local planning authorities:

- Wiltshire Council – to the south, west and east, sharing functional relationships through housing, strategic transport corridors and Gypsy and Traveller needs.
- Cotswold District Council – to the north-east sharing the Zone of Influence of the North Meadow and Clattinger Farm Special Area of Conservation (SAC).
- Oxfordshire County Council – to the east sharing functional relationships through strategic transport connectivity along the A420 corridor.
- Vale of White Horse District Council – to the south-east sharing functional relationships through housing and employment.
- West Berkshire Council – to the south, sharing functional relationships through housing, employment and strategic transport connectivity.
- Gloucestershire County Council – to the north and west, sharing functional relationships through transport corridors A419/A417.

2.1.2. The table below provides a summary of the cross-boundary strategic matters identified in the preparation of the emerging Swindon Local Plan 2043, the relevant bodies engaged on each matter, and the status of the cooperation undertaken.

Strategic Matter	Relevant Bodies	Current Status
Housing need and distribution	Wiltshire Council, Cotswold District Council, Vale of White Horse District Council, West Berkshire Council	SBC is planning to meet its local housing needs in full. SBC is not subject to any current requests to accommodate unmet needs of neighbouring authorities.
Employment land and economic matters	Wiltshire Council, Cotswold District Council, Vale of White Horse District Council, West Berkshire Council	The shared economic market is recognised, with each neighbouring authority seeking to meet employment needs and provide sufficient floorspace to support economic growth and sustainable development.
Strategic road network	National Highways	Impacts on M4 J15/16 & A419 are noted and ongoing engagement is being maintained with National Highways to review discussions in line with growth assumptions.
Public transport infrastructure	Network Rail, Oxfordshire County Council, Gloucestershire County Council	Ongoing engagement between SBC & OCC as proposed NEV allocations will likely increase commuting flows between Swindon and Oxfordshire, along A420 and rail corridor. Ongoing engagement between SBC and Network Rail on the redevelopment of Swindon Station and assessing the feasibility of proposals for new stations east or west in the long-term.
North Meadows and Clattinger Farm Special Area of Conservation (SAC)	Natural England, Cotswold District Council, Wiltshire Council	Each authority and organisation is party to a steering group which meet quarterly regarding this matter. A Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA) is being prepared to consider the impact of development proposed in the emerging Local Plan.

Flood Risk	Environment Agency	Changes have been made to policies following the Regulation 18 consultation. Continued engagement between SBC & EA with regards to SFRA & Water Cycle Study.
Minerals and Waste safeguarding	Wiltshire Council	A Minerals and Waste Plan was historically done in joint with Wiltshire Council however this is no longer the case and SBC plans to commence preparation for a new version under the new Planning Guidance.

3. Conclusion

- 3.1. This Statement of Cooperation has set out how Swindon Borough Council has engaged with its neighbouring authorities and relevant statutory consultees during the preparation of the Swindon Local Plan 2043. It identifies the key strategic cross-boundary matters arising from the Plan and summaries the engagement undertaken to address these matters, together with the current status and position reached following that engagement.
- 3.2. The Statement demonstrates that the Council has engaged constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis with the relevant bodies and authorities in relation to strategic matters that have a significant cross-boundary impact. Where matters remain under discussion, the Statement identifies the current position and any further engagement actions required.
- 3.3. Statements of Common Ground are in preparation to support the Swindon Local Plan 2043 and these will be finalised and submitted alongside the Local Plan at the Regulation 22 stage.
- 3.4. Swindon Borough Council will continue to maintain cooperation with it's neighbouring authorities and relevant bodies as the Local Plan progresses to submission and through the examination process. This Statement of Cooperation will be updated as necessary prior to and following submission of the Plan for independent examination to reflect the outcomes of ongoing engagement and finalisation of Statements of Common Ground and any new matters arising from Regulation 19 consultation responses received from neighbouring authorities or relevant bodies.

Appendix 1: Table to show schedule of engagement of cross-boundary strategic matters with relevant bodies

Date	Strategic matter	Relevant bodies involved	Summary	Key actions and outcomes
22/09/2025	Infrastructure & Environment	Environment Agency, Natural England, Historic England, Thames Water	Local Plan update with relevant statutory bodies during SBC's Regulation 18 consultation. General overview of Local Plan timescales and next steps. Discussed the content of the Regulation 18 consultation and provided the statutory bodies with the opportunity to raise any queries or concerns to help inform their response to the consultation.	SBC encouraged the relevant bodies to make representations to the Regulation 18 consultation.
22/09/2025	Housing, Economy, Infrastructure & Environment	Wiltshire Council	Local Plan update between Swindon Borough Council and Wiltshire Council. General overview of Local Plan timescales and next steps. Discussed the content of the Regulation 18 consultation and cross boundary strategic matters. Provided Wiltshire Council with the opportunity to raise any queries or concerns to help inform their response to the consultation.	SBC and WC to arrange a future meeting once WC have clarity on their examination table.
23/09/2025	Housing & Infrastructure	Cotswold District Council, Vale of White Horse District Council, Oxfordshire County Council, West Berkshire District Council	Local Plan update between Swindon Borough Council and it's neighbouring authorities. General overview of Local Plan timescales and next steps. Discussed the content of the Regulation 18 consultation and cross boundary strategic matters. Provided the Local Authorities with the opportunity to raise any queries or concerns to help inform their response to the consultation.	Authorities agreed to stay in touch as the plan progresses. SBC and VOWH agreed to meet following the Regulation 18 consultation.
23/09/2025	Infrastructure	Cotswold District Council	Discussion around Cotswold District Council's Transport Evidence Base for the emerging Cotswold District Council Local Plan.	SBC and CDC agreed to have a monthly group update in the future to work through matters.
24/09/2025	Infrastructure	Network Rail	Local Plan update with Network Rail during the Regulation 18 consultation. Provided a general overview of the Local Plan and consultation and	SBC to continue conversations and engagement with Network Rail

			current timescales. Discussions involved an update on the Swindon Station redevelopment and overview from Network Rail on strategic planning.	and keep informed regarding the east-west route.
25/09/2025	Infrastructure	SSEN	Local Plan update with SSEN during the Regulation 18 consultation. Provided a general overview of the Local Plan and consultation and current timescales. Discussions involved around the Strategic Development Plan Minety GSP.	SBC to provide SSEN with housing projected figures ahead of Local Plan being published.
08/10/2025	Infrastructure	ICB/GWH	Local Plan update with ICB/GWH during the Regulation 18 consultation. Provided a general overview of the Local Plan and consultation and current timescales. Discussions around healthcare infrastructure across the borough and services to support housing growth.	SBC to meet with ICB/GWH following the Regulation 18 consultation. SBC encouraged ICB to submit a representation to the consultation.
22/10/2025	Housing, Economy & Environment	Wiltshire Council, Cotswold District Council, Vale of White Horse District Council	Meeting organised by Cotswold District Council and its neighbouring authorities to provide an update on their Regulation 18 Consultation.	Cotswold District Council to formally write to LPAs to request any unmet development needs. SBC to keep record of meetings as plan progresses for schedule of engagement.
19/11/2025	Infrastructure	Network Rail	Local Plan update with Network Rail following the Regulation 18 consultation. General overview of the Local Plan and timescales and current work focuses between both organisations.	SBC to continue engagement with Network Rail around GIS and sites.
12/2025	Draft Memorandum	Wilts & Berks Canal	For Swindon Borough Council and the Wilts and Berks Canal Trust to engage collaboratively in developing a shared vision and enabling projects for a restored Wilts and Berks Canal.	SBC finalised and agreed this in 2025.
17/12/2025	Housing	Swindon Borough Council & Cotswold District Council	Cotswold District Council formally wrote to Swindon Borough Council asking for assistance in addressing the shortfall of housing.	SBC issued a formal response dated 22/12/2025.

22/12/2025	Housing	Swindon Borough Council & Cotswold District Council	Swindon Borough Council issued a formal response to Cotswold's Regulation 18 consultation stating that the Council is unfortunately not presently able to indicate whether they are able to assist in meeting unmet housing need.	On 12/08/2026 Council approved Cotswold District Council's Regulation 19 Plan and the Plan makes sufficient provision against the housing requirement.
10/02/2026	Infrastructure	Gloucestershire County Council	Local Plan update with Gloucestershire County Council. Provided a general update on the Local Plan including timescales, Regulation 18 consultation responses and next steps. Discussions around the strategic matter of infrastructure and the A419 as a key road link for connectivity.	SBC to organise a meeting with GCC and National Highways once the transport modelling has progressed, particularly a focus on cross-boundary active travel and public transport opportunities. SBC to share the cycle and transport plan with the transport team working on the LCWIP.
12/02/2026	Environment	Environment Agency	Meeting to discuss EA's representations to the Regulation 18 Consultation and potential scope of the Level 2 SFRA and Water Cycle Detailed Study.	Following EA's comments, SBC to broaden the scope of the scoping report and review baseline data for the detailed study. SBC to contact EA colleague to review the specification. SBC to get in contact with Thames Water to provide the latest data.
21/04/2026	Infrastructure	ICB	An IDP review session. Meeting with ICB Healthcare to discuss baseline infrastructure capacity provision standards and crossbench marks to inform IDP.	Both SBC and ICB Healthcare agreed to further engagement to review discussion in line with growth assumptions.
14/05/2026	Infrastructure	Sports England	An IDP review session. Meeting with Sports England to discuss baseline infrastructure capacity provision standards and crossbench marks to inform IDP.	Both SBC and Sport England agreed to further engagement to review discussion in line with growth assumptions.

19/05/2026	Infrastructure	SSEN	An IDP review session. Meeting with SSEN to discuss baseline infrastructure capacity provision standards and crossbench marks to inform the IDP.	Both SBC and SSEN agreed to further engagement to review discussion in line with growth assumptions.
27/05/2026	Infrastructure	National Highways	An IDP review session. Meeting with National Highways to discuss baseline infrastructure capacity provision standards and crossbench marks to inform the IDP.	Both SBC and National Highways agreed to further engagement to review discussion in line with growth assumptions.
27/05/2026	Infrastructure	Network Rail	An IDP review session. Meeting with Network Rail to discuss baseline infrastructure capacity provision standards and crossbench marks to inform the IDP.	Both SBC and Network Rail agreed to further engagement to review discussion in line with growth assumptions.
27/05/2026	Environment	Environment Agency	Meeting with Environment Agency and Water Cycle consultants Wallingford Hydro Solutions to discuss Water Cycle Scoping Study. Discussions included an overview of the detailed study and water quality and infrastructure issues at the Sewage Treatment Works (STWs).	EA to send SBC STW position to SBC and WHS.
29/05/2026	Infrastructure	National Highways	Meeting with National Highways to discuss timetable, vision, allocations, uncertainty logs and SOCG process.	SBC to confirm the position regarding the Permission development in relation to scheme T09 and to confirm the design scheme at T104 Redposts Drive/Wootton Bassett Road Junction. SBC to organise a meeting with Wiltshire Council to obtain an update on planning applications near Junction 16.
02/07/2026	Infrastructure	National Highways	Meeting with National Highways, discussed SRN modelling, M4 J16, Blunsdon and NEV, trip rates and vision-led reductions, programme and next steps.	National Highways to review key modelling assumptions in advance of runs.

				arcitrans to provide full TRICS outputs and confirm trip-rate/distribution assumptions. SBC and National Highways organised to have monthly meetings.
10/07/2026	Infrastructure	Natural England	Meeting with Natural England to discuss the North Meadows and Clattinger Farm Interim Mitigation Strategy and how this should relate to the Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA).	SBC asked Lepus consultants to incorporate discussion points into the Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA).
15/07/2026	Infrastructure	National Highways	A technical SATURN and VISSIM model integration meeting with National Highways. Discussed M4 J15/J16 corridors and A419 corridor.	
07/08/2026	Infrastructure	National Highways	Meeting with National Highways, discussed uncertainty logs, trip rates, Honda, NEV and Kingsdown and connectivity at Royal Wootton Bassett.	Subject to agreement, arcitrans to finalise the Strategic Transport Model set-up and run the three scenarios (Future Baseline, Do-Minimum, Vision-Led). Highways Uncertainty Log to be kept live and shared with National Highways as schemes progress. SBC and National Highways to continue engagement with monthly meetings.
24/08/2026	Infrastructure	Network Rail & GWR	Meeting with Network Rail, Great Western Railway (GWR) and IDP consultants Troy Planning to consider infrastructure requirements over the plan period based on growth assumptions.	Network Rail to provide or confirm the latest available information on the Swindon Station/Knowledge Central Masterplan, northern access feasibility, parking strategy and indicative delivery programme.

				Network Rail to confirm the appropriate scope and status of the Swindon Station project for inclusion in the Regulation 19 IDS, including any available cost and funding information. Troy Planning to update the rail infrastructure section of the IDP and IDS to reflect the meeting, distinguishing required/planned infrastructure from longer-term aspirations and safeguarding requirements. Troy Planning to reflect the Swindon Station/Knowledge Central enhancement package as the principal current rail infrastructure project, with provisional costs and delivery assumptions.
24/08/2026	Infrastructure	Natural England	Meeting with Natural England and IDP consultants Troy Planning to consider infrastructure requirements over the planned period based on growth assumptions.	Natural England to review the Regulation 19 housing-growth baseline and site extent/shapefile information to be provided by Troy Planning + Design, with a particular focus on North Tadpole and NEV. Natural England to provide any further comments on the relationship between the relevant allocations, SANG requirements

				and opportunities for coordinated/joined-up mitigation. Review the updated chapter of the IDP and relevant IDS entries once circulated by Troy Planning + Design.
25/08/2026	Infrastructure	SSEN	Meeting with SSEN and IDP consultants Troy Planning to consider infrastructure requirements over the planned period based on growth assumptions.	SBC and Troy Planning + Design to provide SSEN with the draft IDP electricity infrastructure chapter and relevant Regulation 19 growth information. SBC and Troy Planning + Design to continue to share updated planning permissions, development trajectories and growth information with SSEN where this can inform DFES and network planning. SSEN to review the draft IDP chapter and confirm whether it accurately represents current provision and SSEN's approach to accommodating Loca Plan growth.
26/08/2026	Infrastructure	Sport England	Meeting with Sports England and IDP consultants Troy Planning to consider infrastructure requirements over the plan period based on growth assumptions.	Sport England to facilitate access to Active Places Power and the relevant Sport England calculator tools for the Regulation 19 assessment. To review the updated sports infrastructure section of the IDP once the calculator work has been

				completed and the draft chapter is circulated by Troy Planning + Design.
27/08/2026	Infrastructure	National Highways	Meeting with National Highways and IDP consultants Troy Planning to consider infrastructure requirements over the plan period based on growth assumptions.	SBC and it's transport advisers to continue the SATURN and VISSIM modelling and finalise the infrastructure mitigation package in consultation with National Highways. Troy Planning + Design to update the Highways and transport IDP chapter and IDS assumptions once the infrastructure mitigation package is received. The IDP to emphasise the vision-led transport approach and clarify the current NEV sustainable transport package, including active travel, bridge proposals and park and ride provision. National Highways, SBC and the IDP team to continue engagement as the modelling and mitigation packages are refined.
04/09/2026	Infrastructure	ICB Healthcare	Meeting with ICB Healthcare and IDP consultants Troy Planning to consider infrastructure requirements over the plan period based on growth assumptions.	Troy Planning + Design to provide ICB with the ICB Regulation 18 consultation response. SBC to share the relevant draft Reg 19 Local Plan policies and strategic allocation information with the ICB.

				BSW ICB to repeat/update its Regulation 18 healthcare growth assessment against the Regulation 19 growth position, identifying the healthcare requirement generated by the relevant allocations and where possible, the likely infrastructure response and indicative cost. SBC, ICB and Troy Planning + Design to continue engagement as the Reg 19 healthcare requirements, IDP and IDS entries are refined.
10/09/2026	Infrastructure	National Highways	Meeting with National Highways. Discussions around Tadpole cluster, NEV residual allocation, M4 J16 applications and central office trip rates.	SBC to publish upcoming Regulation 19 Local Plan. arcitrans to complete STM setup and run Future Baseline, Do-Minimum and Vision-Led scenarios. Meeting proposed for mid-late October 2026.