



Horsham
District
Council

Contribution to coastal unmet housing need

August 2026

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The submission version of the Horsham District Local Plan (HDLP) was prepared in a context where the requirement for water neutrality limited the amount of development that could be delivered in the plan period 2023-2040. This requirement has since fallen away following agreement between the Environment Agency, Southern Water and Natural England, meaning the Council has reassessed the amount of development that can come forward during the life of the plan. Main Modifications have been proposed which allow the plan to meet both Horsham District's local housing need as well as making a contribution towards neighbouring authorities' unmet housing needs.
- 1.2 This paper explains the approach taken by the Council in establishing an appropriate number of homes which should be identified to meet a proportion of these unmet needs.

2 Neighbouring Authorities' Unmet Need

- 2.1 Horsham District primarily lies within the Northern West Sussex Housing Market Areas (NWSHMA), with a small part of the south of Horsham District lying within the Coastal West Sussex HMA (CWSHMA).
- 2.2 The Council has a long-standing position relating to unmet housing need, setting out the prioritisation for where excess housing supply would be assigned, reflecting the differing nature of the two Housing Market Areas and how they relate to Horsham District. This is set out in the Northern West Sussex Housing Market Area Statement of Common Ground: Housing (**DC02**), in which the three authorities (Horsham District, Mid Sussex District and Crawley Borough Councils) agreed that assistance towards unmet housing need from within the HMA should be prioritised as follows:

Priority 1: Northern West Sussex HMA.

Priority 2: Coastal West Sussex HMA.

Priority 3: Other adjacent and nearby HMAs where it is justified by each individual authority.

Northern West Sussex Housing Market Area

- 2.3 In its letter to the Inspector dated 4 February 2026 (**HDCJB01**) the Council set out its intention to address half of the 7,506 homes of unmet need arising from Crawley in the modifications to the HDLP. This equates to some 3,753 (or 3,757 when rounded across the 17-year plan period) homes. This approach was reiterated in the Council's Housing Requirement Matter 1 Topic Paper (**HDCJB04**),

tested in the Matter 1 hearing which took place on Tuesday 21 April 2026 and confirmed by the Inspector in his post-hearings letter dated 5 May 2026 (**IDJB05**).

- 2.4 Main modifications to the submission version of the HDLP have been proposed by the Council to set out the rationale for this approach in the context of the water neutrality requirement having fallen away, and explaining how this number affects the overall housing requirement. Mid Sussex District Council is currently at examination of its local plan and is assessing whether it can meet the remaining 50% of Crawley's unmet need. Should Mid Sussex be able to contribute the remaining need this would mean housing need in the NWSHMA would be met in full up to 2040.

Coastal West Sussex Housing Market Area

- 2.5 The Council's position previously, as set out in Housing Requirement Matter 1 Topic Paper (**HDCJB04**), has been that the unmet need arising from the coast is unlikely to be able to be met in Horsham District in the plan period, due to challenges around market capacity and the need for the plan to be demonstrate deliverability. During the Matter 1 hearing which took place on Tuesday 21 April 2026, the Inspector explored the issue of coastal unmet need and subsequently confirmed in his post-hearings letter of 5 May 2026 (**IDJB05**) that the Council should work with Mid Sussex District Council to devise a methodology for establishing an appropriate number of homes to contribute towards the coastal unmet need figure, and that a figure arising from this should be included in the overall housing requirement. There is no guidance or established methodology, either nationally or locally, for establishing how (or how much) unmet need in one part of a housing market area should be met elsewhere.
- 2.6 The Northern West Sussex Strategic Housing Market Assessment (**H01**) refers to the Coastal West Sussex Housing Market Area and explains that the most established links are with wards in the south of Horsham District.
- 2.7 Adur District Council's current local plan was adopted in 2017 established an unmet housing need of 3,107 upon adoption. Its new local plan is at a preliminary stage, with no formal or public position having been reached on its housing need. Worthing Borough Council's local plan was adopted in 2023, and this resulted in an unmet need of 10,488 homes when comparing its standard method figure to the plan's requirement.
- 2.8 In recent discussions, Adur and Worthing Councils made clear that they are at an early stage of establishing the housing need for any new local plan, supply to meet this need, and the scale of their resulting unmet need. An approach has been taken which uses the unmet need figure established in

the Worthing Local Plan of 10,488 and Adur District Council's current objectively assessed need and their published five-year housing land supply to calculate an unmet need of for Adur 5,835. Adur and Worthing Councils have indicated these figures represent realistic and accurate picture of the current unmet need positions across both authority areas notwithstanding that detailed work into their strategic needs have not been undertaken at this stage.

- 2.9 The Council, following engagement with Mid Sussex District Council and Adur and Worthing Councils, has settled on an appropriate methodology for calculating how much unmet housing need should be addressed by each authority. For Horsham, this uses historic migration patterns to establish what proportion of all out-migration from Adur and Worthing moves into Horsham and applies this to the Adur and Worthing unmet need figure. This approach is consistent the methodology outlined in Mid Sussex District Council's ¹MS-TP4: Housing Post Hearings Update. This is set out below:

Table 1: Outmigration from Adur District and Worthing Borough to Horsham District

Outmigration Origin/Destination	No. of People Migrating
Adur to Horsham	211
Adur Total	3,679
% Adur Outmigration to Horsham	5.7%
Worthing to Horsham	316
Worthing Total	6,102
% Worthing Outmigration to Horsham	5.2%

- 2.10 On the basis of these outmigration figures and the unmet need figures from Adur and Worthing, the Council should seek to accommodate 5.2% of Adur and Worthing's unmet need. This equates to the following number of homes during the plan period and annualised across the 17 years:

¹ <https://www.midsussex.gov.uk/media/oowpb5xg/mstp04-housing-update.pdf>

Table 2: Horsham contributions to unmet need

Authority	Unmet Need	% Outmigration to Horsham	HDC Contribution in Plan Period	HDC Contribution Annualised Average
Adur	5,835	5.7%	335	20
Worthing	10,488	5.2%	543	32
Total	-	-	878	52

- 2.11 The Council considers this to be the most appropriate approach because the methodology considers historic flows of people from the Adur and Worthing authority areas and translates this directly into unmet need. This figure is then counted to Horsham's own local housing need and Horsham's contribution towards half of Crawley's unmet need to establish the overall requirement for the HDLP, shown in The Council is proposing a stepped requirement on adoption, and it is anticipated that the unmet need apportionment will reflect this step such that the requirement and completions for each year will be split across each authority reflecting its proportion of the overall requirement figure.
- 2.12 Table 3 below. The Council is proposing a stepped requirement on adoption, and it is anticipated that the unmet need apportionment will reflect this step such that the requirement and completions for each year will be split across each authority reflecting its proportion of the overall requirement figure.

Table 3: Horsham Housing Requirement including Unmet Need Contributions

Authority	Housing Need Met in HDLP (2023-2040)
Horsham District Council	14,071
Crawley Borough Council	3,757
Adur District Council	335 (340 annualised figure rounded)
Worthing Borough Council	543 (544 annualised figure rounded)

Total	18,706 (18,712 using annual figures)
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2.13 There are a number of Main Modifications² proposed to the Plan which account for the contribution to unmet need at the coast. MM24, MM140 and MM142 set out the expectation that the HDLP will contribute towards unmet need arising elsewhere, and MM147 updates the Plan's overall housing requirement figure to include this contribution.

² [Horsham District Council Schedule of Suggested Main Modifications](#)