



Kingston Local Plan

**Statement of Common Ground between the
Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames and
The London Borough of Sutton**

August 2026



Table of Contents

1. Introduction	4
Background	4
2. Strategic Geography	6
3. Strategic Matters	7
Meeting identified housing needs within the borough and wider unmet housing needs	7
Meeting identified employment land needs within the borough and wider unmet housing needs	7
Meeting the identified need for Gypsy and Traveller accommodation within the borough and wider unmet needs	8
Green Belt & Metropolitan Open Land	8
Cross Boundary Development	9
Transport	9
Town Centres and Retail	9
Minerals and Waste	10
Flooding/ Critical Drainage Area	10
Climate change mitigation and adaptation	11
Record of agreement:	11
4. Governance Arrangements	12
5. Timetable for review and ongoing cooperation	13
6. Signatories	14

1. Introduction

- 1.1. A Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) is a documented record of the progress made by strategic policy-making authorities in addressing cross-boundary matters during the planning process. This SoCG has been created to show that Kingston's draft Local Plan is built on effective collaborative efforts regarding cross-boundary strategic issues, aligning with the requirements of paragraph 27 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the Planning Practice Guidance chapter on Maintaining Effective Cooperation.
- 1.2. This Statement of Common ground addresses key strategic matters between the two signatories, the Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames (RBK) and the London Borough of Sutton (LBS), as relevant to the preparation of the Kingston Draft Local Plan and its progression to public Examination.
- 1.3. Strategic matters overseen by other organisations will be addressed in other SoCGs, in order to streamline the process of reaching agreements with each party.
- 1.4. This SoCG concentrates on the strategic cross-boundary issues being tackled and the progress made in cooperative efforts to address them.
- 1.5. In the context of London, most strategic issues that extend beyond borough boundaries, such as housing targets and major growth areas, are primarily addressed by the London Plan. London Boroughs are working to implement the policies in the London Plan. Some of these policies are particularly relevant to this SoCG and are summarised in the key strategic matters below.
- 1.6. The document is intended to be 'live', updated as circumstances change. Please see the Governance Arrangements section of the statement for more details.

Background

- 1.7. Kingston Council prepared the Publication Draft Local Plan and will publish it for consultation between 6 July and 4 September 2026. This is the version of the Plan that the Council considers to be 'legally compliant' and 'sound' and will be submitted to the Planning Inspectorate for examination in December 2026.
- 1.8. To date, Kingston Council has consulted on:
 - Early engagement on the draft Local Plan (Regulation 18) between May and July 2019
 - Further engagement on the draft Local Plan (Regulation 18) between July and September 2021
 - A First Draft Local Plan (Regulation 18) between November 2022 and February 2023.

- 1.9. The Council will consult on a Publication Draft Local Plan (Regulation 19) between July and September 2026.

2. Strategic Geography

- 2.1. This section sets out the factual position regarding cross boundary matters.
- 2.2. RBK is a London borough and, together with the other 31 boroughs and the City of London Corporation, sits within the regional governance of the Greater London Authority. Kingston is bordered by the London Boroughs of Richmond upon Thames, Wandsworth, Merton, and Sutton. In addition, Kingston shares its boundaries with the Surrey borough councils of Elmbridge, Epsom & Ewell, and Mole Valley which are also covered by Surrey County Council - the borough councils are responsible for planning, and the county council is responsible for strategic functions and services such as transport and education. Local Government reorganisation is underway and due to create new unitary authority of East Surrey from April 2027 to replace these councils.
- 2.3. LBS and RBK are both outer London boroughs as defined in the London planning process (Annex 2 of the 2021 London Plan).
- 2.4. The area shown in Figure 1 has been identified as the strategic planning area for the purposes of this SoCG. These boroughs represent key cooperative partners and contain areas most likely to be directly affected by the policies set out in the Kingston Local Plan.

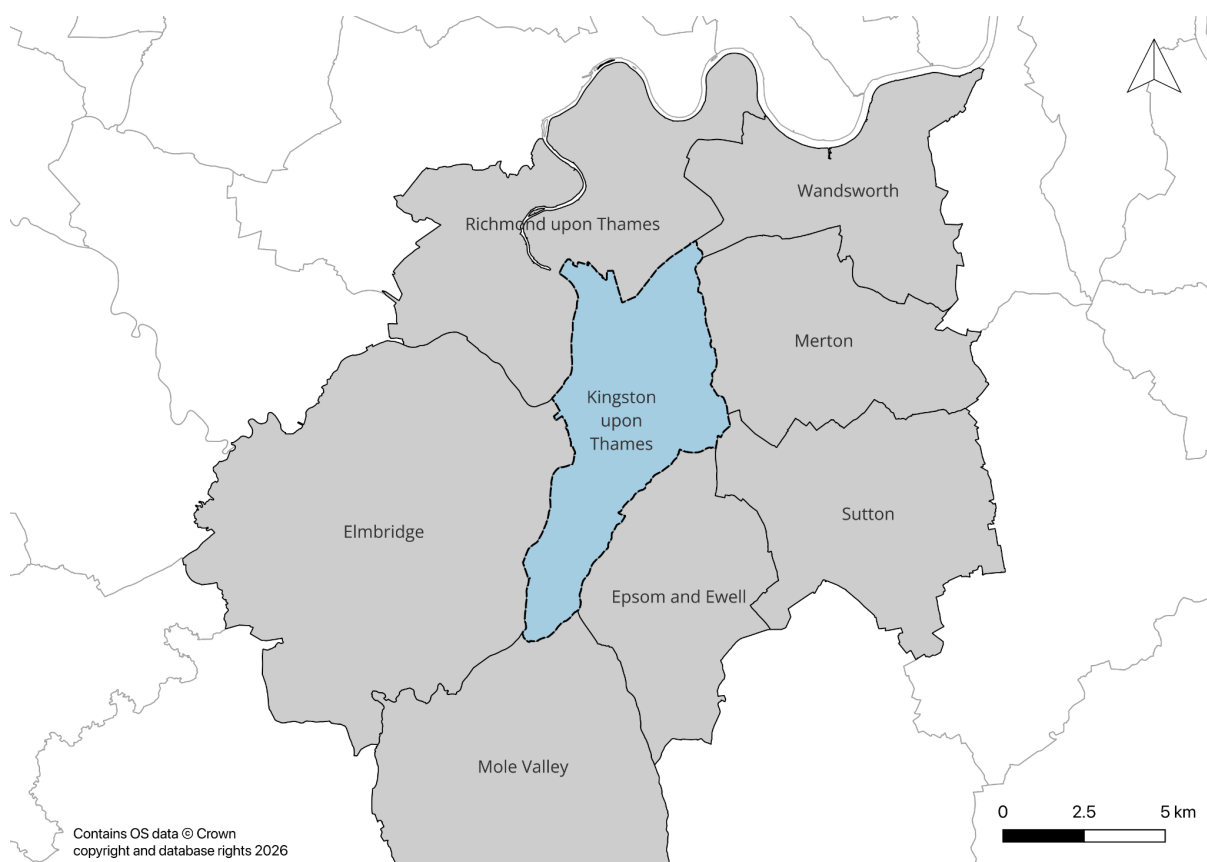


Figure 1: Map of Kingston in relation to its neighbouring authorities

3. Strategic Matters

- 3.1. Kingston's new Local Plan seeks to address a number of key strategic matters. Each is considered in turn. The SoCG identifies where there are specific areas of joint working or cooperation. The parties agree to work together through several actions, which are detailed as records of agreement. Where relevant, this SoCG also highlights where agreement on key strategic matters have not, as yet, been reached.
- 3.2. Both parties will continue to communicate in a collaborative manner and engage with each other through 1-2-1 meetings, informal telephone and email correspondence and statutory consultation exercises. There is also broad collaborative working as part of the South London Partnership, which along with Croydon, Merton and Richmond upon Thames, focuses on shaping sustainable growth across the sub-region.

Meeting identified housing needs within the borough and wider unmet housing needs

- 3.3. RBK's identified housing land supply falls significantly short of the total homes required through 2043. With a current five-year housing land supply of only 1.48 years, the Council faces an acute delivery challenge.
- 3.4. Whilst Greater London is considered to be the strategic housing market area for the purposes of the London Plan and its SHLAA, the more detailed assessment at a local level identifies five sub-regional areas (North, East, West, South and Central). Kingston is identified within the South area along with immediate neighbours, Merton, Wandsworth, Richmond and Sutton.
- 3.5. In April 2026 RBK approached its neighbouring authorities seeking clarification on whether neighbouring authorities could assist in accommodating RBK's unmet development needs, including housing delivery. LBS has advised that it cannot meet its own housing need so is not in a position to take unmet need from Kingston..

Meeting identified employment land needs within the borough and wider unmet housing needs

- 3.6. RBK's Employment Land Review (ELR) 2021 identifies a requirement to plan for 59,050 sq.m of new employment floorspace up to 2041. However, when comparing our estimated demand against all currently identified supply (including potential intensification of existing sites), the ELR identifies a significant overall shortfall of up to 67,270 sq.m. Specifically, there is an acute shortfall of 44,400 sq.m for office space, alongside insufficient supply to meet our industrial and light industrial requirements.

- 3.7. In April 2026 RBK approached its neighbouring authorities seeking clarification on whether neighbouring authorities could assist in accommodating RBK's unmet development needs, including employment lands needs. LBS have advised that they do not have the capacity to take on RBK's shortfall for office, retail or industrial space.

Meeting the identified need for Gypsy and Traveller accommodation within the borough and wider unmet needs

- 3.8. The 2025 London Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment (GTANA) identifies a requirement for 52 additional permanent pitches (2022–2032) and 100 residential units to address overcrowding for those currently in 'bricks and mortar' housing. Despite conducting site assessments of council-owned land and a Green Belt Review, RBK is still struggling to meet its need in the first 10 years of the New Local Plan.
- 3.9. In April 2026 RBK approached its neighbouring authorities seeking clarification on whether neighbouring authorities could assist in accommodating Kingston's unmet development needs, including gypsy and traveller accommodation needs. LBS has advised that they do not have surplus capacity to take on RBK's shortfall for gypsy and traveller accommodation.
- 3.10. RBK is continuing to investigate all reasonable opportunities to meet identified needs within the borough boundary, including through site allocations, optimisation of existing provision, and engagement with landowners and development partners.
- 3.11. Gypsy and Traveller accommodation is a strategic cross-boundary matter requiring ongoing cooperation. The boroughs will continue to engage constructively and actively through the preparation of their respective Local Plans, including through the exchange of evidence and updates relating to accommodation needs, site delivery, and any emerging opportunities for collaboration.

Green Belt & Metropolitan Open Land

- 3.12. The boundaries of RBK and LBS lie adjacent to each other, in some parts separated by Metropolitan Open Land (MOL). This means that changes to MOL designations is a strategic matter that requires ongoing cooperation.
- 3.13. Both boroughs are proposing the release of Green Belt and MOL sites, which is a key cross-boundary issue because RBK is specifically considering the release of MOL sites near the shared boundary with Sutton.
- 3.14. The management of Green Belt land will require both RBK and LBS to work strategically to ensure the purposes of the Green Belt remain protected in accordance with national policy.

Cross Boundary Development

- 3.15. **Proposed Site Allocation NOM06: Gasholder, West Barnes Lane, Motspur Park** is located on a parcel of land that requires access via the north on land contained within the London Borough of Merton. The site is close to the northern boundary of LBS.
- 3.16. The parties acknowledge that a planning application relating to the site has been approved by the Mayor of London. Given that the deliverability of the proposal is dependent on the approval of the northern access point into the site, both authorities have engaged on cross-boundary transport and access considerations associated with the proposal.
- 3.17. **Proposed Site Allocation NOM05: Former Worcester Park Tavern** is located close to the border with LBS. There are no cross boundary issues identified at this stage.

Transport

- 3.18. Main roads that cross the border between LBS and RBK and surrounding boroughs
- Maden Road (A2043)
- 3.19. There are no overground rail lines connecting LBS and RBK.
- 3.20. Bus routes that cross the border between LBS and RBK and surrounding boroughs:
- 213 - connects Kingston town centre with New Malden and Sutton.
 - S3 - connects Malden Manor to Worcester Park, North Cheam and Sutton
- 3.21. LBS and RBK share road and rail links between each borough and out to Surrey and the south coast. Both are also London boroughs who deliver the Mayor's Transport Strategy via each borough's Local Implementation Plan which is produced every three years, in consultation with Transport for London and neighbouring London boroughs. TfL runs the day-to-day operation of London's public transport network (including London Buses, London Underground and Overground, Docklands Light Railway, TfL Rail and London Trams).

Town Centres and Retail

- 3.22. The London Plan identifies a hierarchy of the city's larger town centres, recognising the different size, draw and function of them.
- 3.23. The Kingston Local Plan identifies four town centres – a Metropolitan centre (Kingston town centre) as a metropolitan centre – and beneath this it also identifies New Malden, Surbiton and Tolworth as District Centres.

- 3.24. Between boroughs, town centres and parades can be shared by virtue of them crossing the borough boundary. There are no instances of this between LBS and RBK.
- 3.25. The RBK Retail and Leisure Needs Assessment (RLNA) 2022 indicates a strong need for new convenience goods floorspace within the borough. The projections forecast a need for 8,532 sq.m net by 2029, and 7,971 sq.m net by 2041. Our strategy aims to direct this need to our existing network of town and local centres in the first instance.
- 3.26. In April 2026 RBK approached its neighbouring authorities seeking clarification on whether neighbouring authorities could assist in accommodating Kingston's unmet town centre and retail needs. LBS has advised that they do not have surplus capacity to take on Kingston's shortfall for retail needs.

Minerals and Waste

- 3.27. Together with the neighbouring boroughs of Croydon, Merton and Sutton, RBK prepared and adopted the joint development plan document, the South London Waste Plan in 2012 and its review, the South London Waste Plan 2022. The South London Waste Plan 2022 was adopted on 14 December 2022.

Flooding/ Critical Drainage Area

- 3.28. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and associated Planning Practice Guidance for Flood Risk and Coastal Change (PPG) set out the active role Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) should take to ensure that flood risk is understood and managed effectively and sustainably throughout all stages of the planning process. The NPPF outlines that Local Plans should be supported by a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) and LPAs should use the findings to inform strategic land use planning.
- 3.29. RBK has commissioned Metis to produce an SFRA, including Level 1 and 2 Assessment, to inform the Local Plan.
- 3.30. The borough is significantly constrained by fluvial flood risk emanating from the River Thames and its key tributaries: the River Hogsmill, Beverley Brook, and Surbiton Stream. The principal areas subject to this river flooding include:

Kingston Town Centre (The Metropolitan Centre): This area is exceptionally vulnerable and faces acute flood risk due to the geographical confluence of the River Thames and the River Hogsmill. Strategic modelling shows that significant portions of the town centre, including land directly along the Thames, fall within these high-risk zones.

The Hogsmill Valley: The land surrounding the River Hogsmill corridor as it flows from the east towards the town centre is a primary flood risk area.

Eastern Boundary: The land forming the borough's eastern boundary is severely constrained by flood risk from Beverley Brook.

Chessington: In the south of the borough, areas surrounding the Bonesgate Stream are formally identified as being at risk of fluvial flooding.

- 3.31. Beyond river flooding, the densely urbanised and populated areas of the borough are highly susceptible to surface water flooding. To manage this, the borough's Surface Water Management Plan (SWMP) has categorised the risk into Critical Drainage Areas (CDAs) and five primary catchments: Bonesgate Stream, Surbiton Stream, Upper Hogsmill River, Beverley Brook, and the Thames and Lower Hogsmill Rivers.
- 3.32. The primary fluvial flood risk along Kingston's eastern boundary—which interfaces with the London Borough of Sutton and the London Borough of Merton—is dictated by the Beverley Brook. The Beverley Brook is an Environment Agency designated main river that poses a significant fluvial flood risk to the properties located within its hydrological catchment. Because water movement and drainage are not artificially constrained by administrative boundaries, surface water and fluvial flows in this area operate on a catchment-wide basis.
- 3.33. Both Kingston and Sutton act as Lead Local Flood Authorities (LLFAs) for their respective administrative areas, granting them the statutory operational role under the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 in managing local flood risks originating from surface water, ordinary watercourses, and groundwater. Surface water flooding, in particular, is a critical issue across this outer-London sub-region due to the extent of impermeable urban ground coverage and the increasing frequency of high-intensity rainfall events driven by climate change.
- 3.34. There are no substantial cross boundary issues arising from flooding and drainage between the two boroughs.

Climate change mitigation and adaptation

- 3.35. Both RBK and LBS declared a Climate Change Emergency in 2019.
- 3.36. RBK's Regulation 19 Local Plan proposes introducing a range of policies to reduce carbon emissions from new development, mitigate the effects of climate change and reduce water use.
- 3.37. Both boroughs participate in pan London forums on climate change matters and while climate change is a strategic cross boundary matter for all councils, there are no specific issues identified between Sutton and Kingston.

Record of agreement:

- 3.38. Both parties agree that the above represents the key strategic matters at this stage of the Local Plan process.

4. Governance Arrangements

- 4.1. SoCGs need to be prepared and then maintained on an ongoing basis; and be made publicly available to allow transparency. This SoCG is a live document, to be reviewed and updated regularly so that it reflects the most up-to-date position in terms of joint working, especially:
- Whenever agreements on outstanding matters have been reached and where progress in addressing strategic cross boundary matters is achieved, or
 - At each subsequent key stage of the plan making process, as it progresses towards adoption.
- 4.2. Requirements for signing documents differ between Local Authorities depending on their structure. It will be for each body to decide who is the appropriate person to sign the statement.

5. Timetable for review and ongoing cooperation

- 5.1. This statement has been informed by on-going engagement between the parties and has been informed by various evidence base documents.
- 5.2. This SoCG is a live document and will be reviewed on a regular basis, informed by continued communication between the parties through meetings, statutory consultation at key plan making stages and electronic communication.

6. Signatories

- 6.1. Both parties agree that this statement is an accurate representation of matters discussed and issues agreed upon.
- 6.2. Both parties agree that they have engaged positively on an ongoing basis and that on this basis the Duty to Cooperate has been met.
- 6.3. Both parties agree that there are no substantial areas of disagreement between the parties relating to the emerging Kingston Local Plan and will both continue to work proactively on the key strategic cross boundary issues identified in this SCG.

Signed:	Signed:
	
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Position:	Position:
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Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames (RBK)	London Borough of Sutton (LBS)
Date: 29.06.2026	Date: 30.06.2026



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THE ROYAL BOROUGH OF
KINGSTON
UPON THAMES