

About Gosport



St Vincent has been at the core of the Gosport community for more than 150 years, having been in the past a base for the Royal Marines and the Royal Navy until the site was converted to educational use in the 1970s. Historically, the town has had significant military connections over the years, having hosted a variety of establishments serving the Royal Navy, army, and Royal Air Force. While the town's economic reliance on the services has diminished in the past 20 years or so, the Royal Navy in particular remains a major employer via the training base at HMS Sultan, the aircraft repair facility at Fleetlands and the Naval Base at Portsmouth. In 1982 the Ferry Gardens – now re-named Falklands Gardens – were a significant gathering point as the population saw the 'Task Force' off to war.

With a population of around 80,000, Gosport has a broad socio-economic mix of people, from the relatively affluent and leafy lanes of Alverstoke and the sleepy seaside resort of Lee-on-the-Solent, to areas of significant multiple deprivation in parts of Rowner, Bridgemary and in the immediate vicinity of the college in the heart of the town. Outside of the military, there are only a few major local employers, with the majority of employment to be found in smaller and medium-sized enterprises. Unemployment in Gosport tends to be higher than the Hampshire and south-east average. Educational attainment is patchy throughout the borough. One secondary school currently has a 'notice to improve' whilst the other two are 'outstanding' and 'satisfactory' according to the most recent Ofsted reports. The outstanding school also has a sixth form. In line with its population there is a diverse mix of housing, with prices tending to be slightly lower than the regional average.

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However, being situated on a peninsula, Gosport has a distinct identity and a strong community spirit, with a range of thriving strategic partnerships looking to improve all aspects of the town's well-being. An increasingly important contributor to the local economy is the sailing industry, with the town having several marinas and its own yacht-building company. The vacation of premises by the navy and army in the past 20 years or so has allowed the local authority to initiate a number of imaginative developments, notably on the former St George Barracks and Clarence Yard, a former naval victualling depot. The former Royal Hospital at Haslar is currently being redeveloped, offering a wealth of commercial opportunity, and part of the former HMS Daedalus site in Lee-on-the-Solent has been designated an Enterprise Zone.

Culturally, Gosport has a thriving local music scene and holds a range of arts and community festivals and shows throughout the year. For more variety Portsmouth is easily accessible by ferry. Gunwharf Quays, incorporating the Spinnaker Tower is an award-winning re-development of former navy land. The city has a world-class historic dockyard, including HMS Victory, nationally-renowned concert venues and theatres and a professional football club.

Gosport is reached by road via the A32 from Fareham, which is well-served by a railway station and easy access to the M27. Portsmouth is reached by ferry (less than two minutes away) and there is a railway station there with fast, direct links to London. Portsmouth also has ferry ports to access both the continent and the Isle of Wight. The nearest airport is at Southampton, approximately 20 miles to the west.